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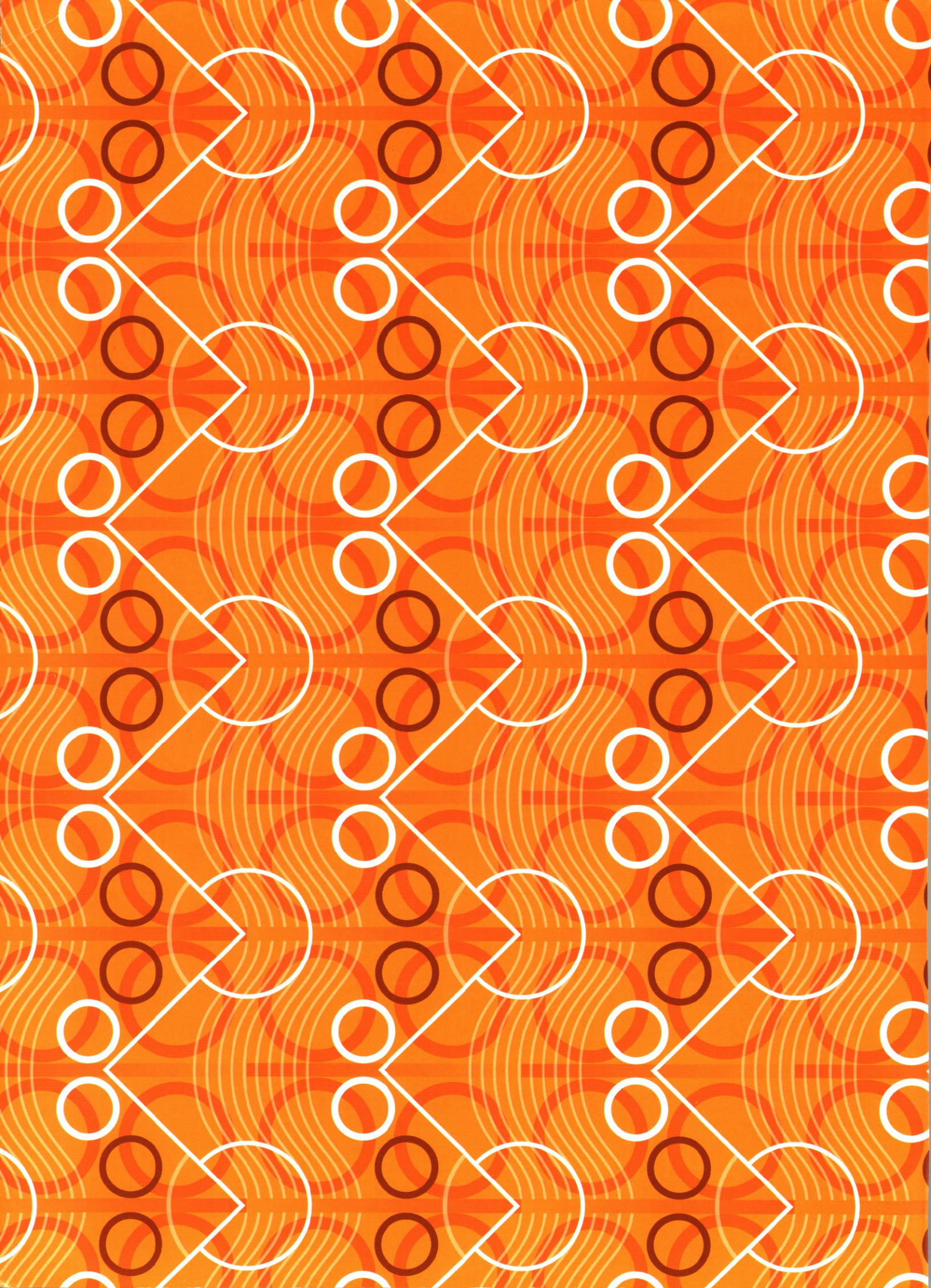

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STUDIO TRAINING ILLUSTRATOR

Welcome to the second in the series of Studio Training guides from the makers of Computer Arts. Over the following 100 pages you'll learn some in-depth Illustrator design and illustration secrets that you can put to use in your daily design work.

This special is divided neatly into four sections – and although you'll get something from each no matter what your discipline, you can quickly jump to the features that are most relevant to your workflow and design goals.

First up we look at core skills – the techniques, tips and tricks that every Illustrator user should know (page 17). Our experts bring you walkthroughs on everything from speeding up your workflow as a whole to getting faster with the Pen, Shape and Pathfinder tools. There's also some excellent creative workshops. Next, we specialise in techniques you'll need to create logos and identity work in Illustrator (page 49).

Then, we focus on editing and manipulating type in Illustrator (page 65), finishing up with illustration skills for the web (page 79). Enjoy this edition, and look out for an InDesign special coming soon (see page 98 for details).

ROB CARNEY
EDITOR
rob.carney@futurenet.com

STUDIO TRAINING ILLUSTRATOR

BEST PRACTICE

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COMPUTER ARTS DESIGN MATTERS

ILLUSTRATED TYPE

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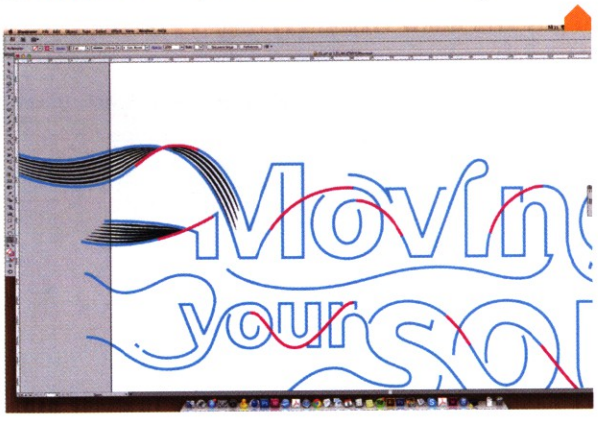

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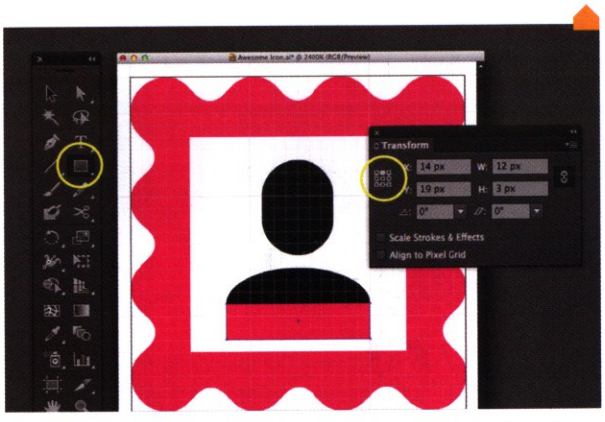

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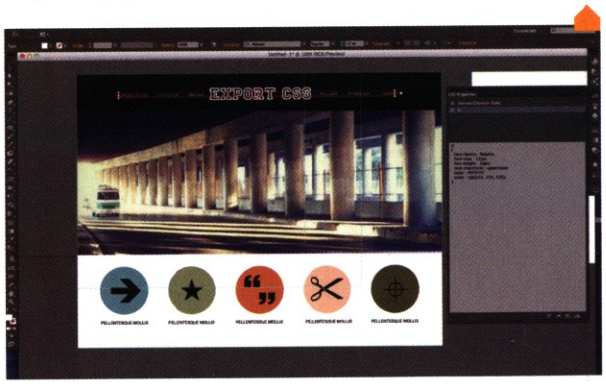

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Combine the Kuler app for iOS and Adobe Illustrator to create crisp web graphics.

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Turn to page 92 for everything you need to know about Illustrator's tools, shortcuts and how to control them...

ILLUSTRATOR GALLERY

SHOWCASE

Incredible illustration, identity, logo, icon and UI design all created in Adobe Illustrator

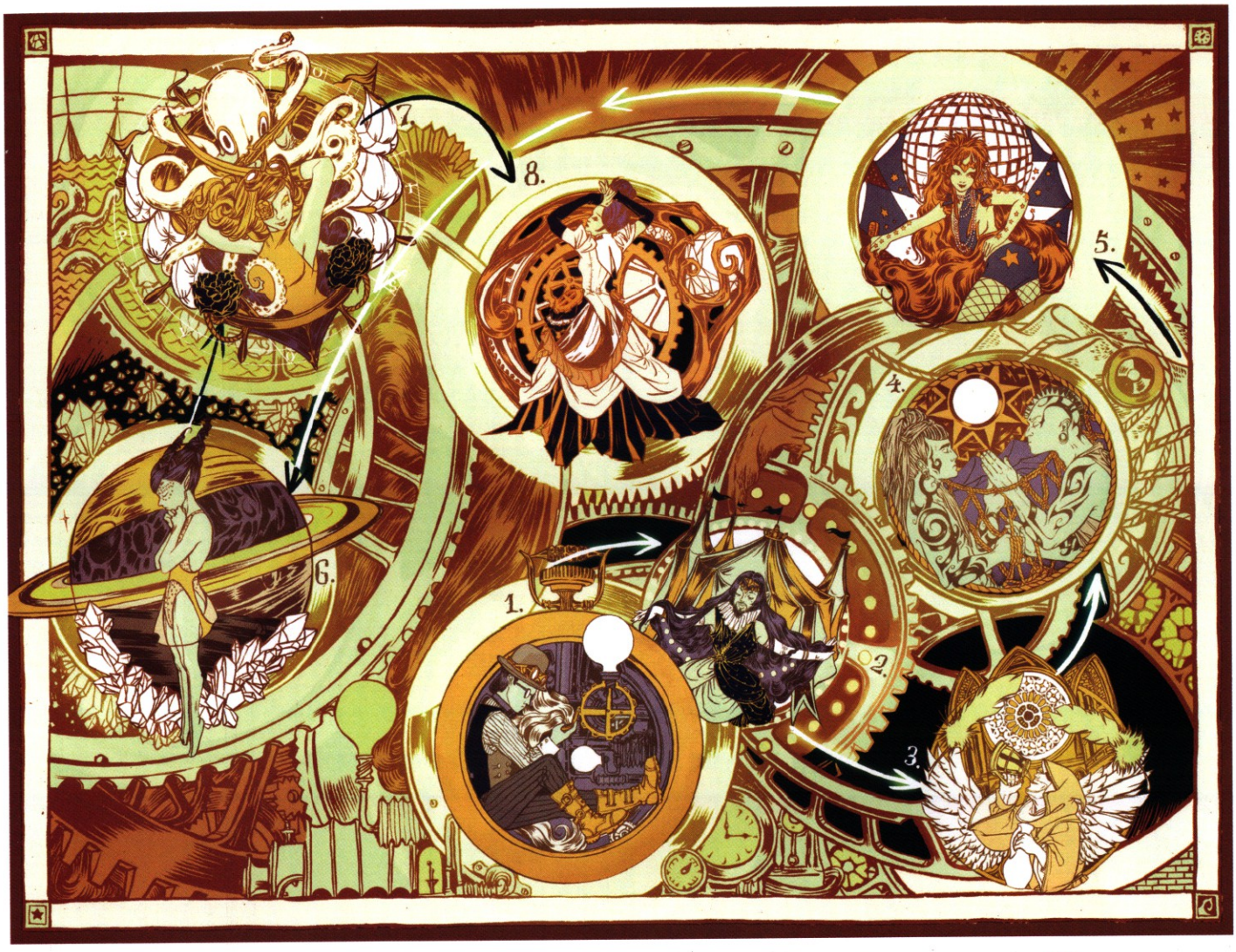
ILLUSTRATION
LIL' BISCUIT

ILLUSTRATOR: KRONK
Client: Piece Industries
www.kronk.co.za

Based in Cape Town, Piece Industries is a small company that focuses on delivering high quality homegrown surf and skateboards. For their first range of skimboards, the company invited multidisciplined designer Kris Hewitt, otherwise known as Kronk, to work on one. And the result was this beautiful and elaborate vector design, which he created in Illustrator.

"Essentially Illustrator was used for all the line work, colouring and final execution of the artwork," he says. "I love crisp edges, geometry and bold linework. Using Illustrator and its tools provide the best solution for this."

For this project in particular, Kronk heavily utilised his favourite tool. "The Pen tool is absolutely essential," he comments. "I use it so often that it's become like an old friend or a favourite pencil. Other than that I use an array of the shape tools, stroke width variations, smart guides and so on. I like to work accurately and precisely, so a lot of my time is spent using things like the Scissor tool. Snipping and joining lines so that they flow smooth and clean."



ILLUSTRATION

STEAMPUNK TIME TRAVEL

ILLUSTRATOR: YAO XIAO

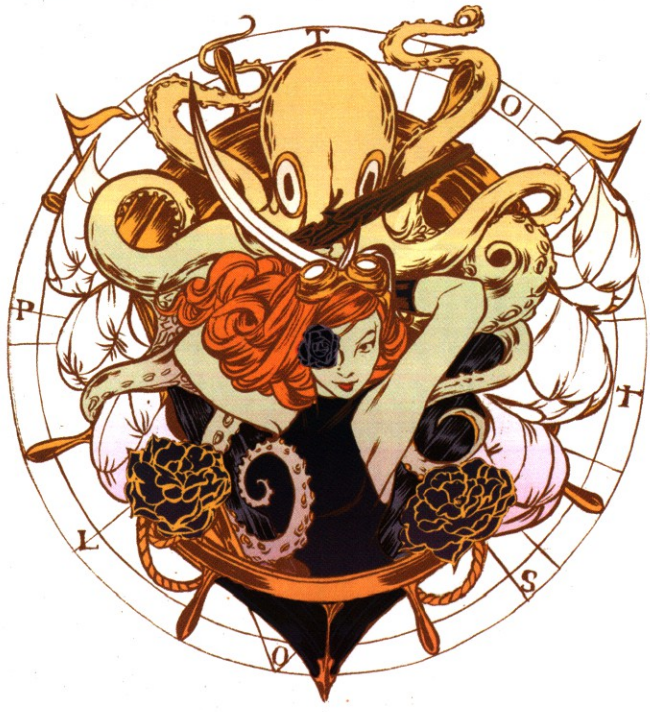
Client: ImaginAerial entertainment

www.yaoxiaoart.com

In 2013, ImaginAerial entertainment commissioned New York-based illustrator Yao Xiao to create a series of illustrations, all of which would make up an intricate map, for its aerial variety show, 'The Bizarre and Curious Quest of Killian Cog'. An avid user of Adobe Illustrator, Xiao turned to its toolset to piece the project together.

"Illustrator's primary function was composing all of the highly detailed elements," she says. "I originally created each illustration by hand and, after giving each drawing its initial colour palette in Photoshop, I placed all of them into Illustrator and started designing the whole map."

Throughout the project, Xiao used three primary Illustrator tools. "The Selection, Direct Selection and Lasso features were my primary tools," she comments. "The Selection tool and Direct Selection tool enabled me to quickly select items to move in the image. I needed the individual elements to fall in seamlessly with the backdrop, which meant a lot of arranging and re-adjusting. The Lasso tool was helpful when elements were very close together."



ILLUSTRATION

FOOTLOCKER TEES

ILLUSTRATOR: YO AZ
Client: Nike
www.yoaz.tumblr.com

French illustrator Yo Az is the artist behind these highly detailed t-shirt designs for Nike. The brief was to develop two artworks, both of which would incorporate shoes in the Nike collection with organic and geometric elements around them. Yo Az started sketching out his ideas by hand before moving into Illustrator. "I'm totally comfortable at work in Illustrator. Thanks to the Pen tool it enables me to master my lines perfectly," he says.

When creating such intricate patterns, Yo Az has other favourite tools that he often turns to. "I really like the Width tool when creating shapes, especially when it's for images that have a lot of small details," he says. "I also like the gradient tool in Illustrator as opposed to the one in Photoshop as I feel it's more fluid. I certainly think for creating big gradients, Illustrator is the better software to use and is much easier to apply."

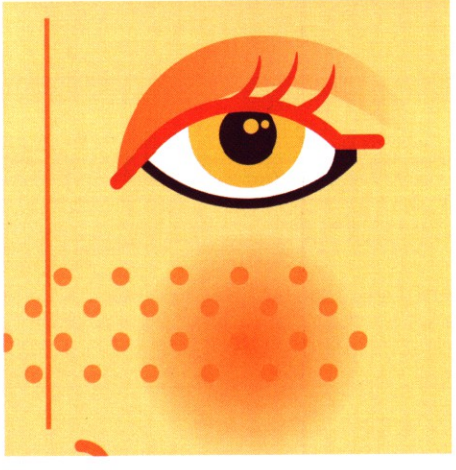
ILLUSTRATION
BICYCLE FILM FESTIVAL POSTER

ILLUSTRATOR: FRANCESCO POROLI
Client: Milan Bicycle Film Festival
www.francescoporoli.it

This eye-catching illustration was recently developed by designer Francesco Poroli to promote the Bicycle Film Festival, that began in Milan in December last year. "I did a very rough sketch on paper for this project initially, which I imported into Illustrator and then did all over again," Poroli says.

When using the software, Poroli maintains true to his style: "I always try to use the least amount of tools possible to preserve my geometric style," he says. "Simple curves and simple lines with the pen are enough for me to create basic shapes. This helps me stay away from a more realistic and detailed style that isn't mine. For the same reason, I don't use a tablet, only my mouse. I feel that forcing myself and my workflow to be as simple as possible keeps my style more pure."

Illustrator also provides the perfect solution to Poroli's sizing issues. "Working in Illustrator makes life a lot easier for me as, when I work, I am constantly resizing what I draw. Working with vectors in Illustrator means that's incredibly easy and removes the issue of resolution."



TYPOGRAPHY

I LOVE JAZZ

ILLUSTRATOR: MARCELO SCHULTZ
Client: Belo Horizonte/Brasília jazz festival
www.behance.net/marceloschultz

This striking 'I Love Jazz' poster was created by designer Marcelo Schultz for a Brazilian Jazz festival earlier this year. Having previously always started his creative work in Photoshop, Schultz has recently adopted a different approach. "I realised that it was easier creating paths in Illustrator because of its Pathfinder panel. So, now I create the bulk of each element in Illustrator and then export it as a shape layer, which enables the element to be edited in Photoshop, as if it was created there initially."

The Pathfinder panel is not the only Illustrator feature Schultz used extensively on this project. "I also used the 3D features a lot, which is evident in the illustration with the drums and violin textures. It really saved me time when creating the clamps of the drums, violin strings and other parts."

Having worked with Illustrator for a while now, Schultz believes the software is a great tool for artists looking to further their skill set. "If you're not an illustrator, try importing an image into Illustrator and redrawing it using the path tool. It's a really good way to improve your drawing skills and improve your control of paths and strokes."

TYPOGRAPHY

INTERNET BROWSING

ILLUSTRATOR: AMICOLLECTIVE
Client: JWT Australia
www.amicollective.com

When the team at Cape Town-based creative agency AmICollective were asked by JWT Australia to translate the concept of browsing the Internet into three unique typographic executions, they turned to Illustrator's extensive toolset. "We designed each layout and basic flat illustration structures in vector and handmade the fonts in two of the three executions using Illustrator," says head of illustration Justin Poulter. "Firstly the Pen tool was used to draw up all the hand-rendered letter forms. These were drawn straight and then warped using the Envelope Mesh tool."

As production progressed, the team used even more of Illustrator's features to achieve the desired effect. "The Pathfinder preset tools came in handy when executing the type," Poulter says. "We also used gradients in some cases to aid painting on the later Photoshop stages."

The team paid close attention to detail to avoid any delays. "An important tip when working in Illustrator, is to get all the vector art that you create correct in the early stages of the project," says Poulter.

TYPOGRAPHY
TAMDHU CUSTOM TYPE

ILLUSTRATOR: STEVEN BONNER
Client: Tamdhu
www.stevenbonner.com

Veteran designer Steven Bonner recently worked on creating the signature monogram and custom script lettering for the rebrand of Tamdhu Single Malt Scotch Whisky. "As my involvement was to create elements for the designers to work with, I had to be mindful of flexibility, so working in vector with Illustrator was the only option as far as I was concerned," he says.

"The graphics needed to be crisp and fully scalable for a variety of uses. Using Illustrator meant I could create editable elements that could be reduced to their basic, most legible elements when small, but could retain finer details when used larger."

The project also required the creation of a repeating pattern for the backdrop, for which Bonner fully utilised the Pattern Creation tool. "It was invaluable for this piece," he says. "Using this tool turns what would normally be a labourious loop of trial and error into a quick and easily adjustable task." Bonner also champions the use of Illustrator's grids. "Whether it's lettering, logo, or patterns – set up your grids early. Working to a grid provides you with an early method of ensuring the elements you draw have a balance to them."

TYPOGRAPHY
ARCHANGELS

ILLUSTRATOR: TOM LANE
Client: Theory11
www.gingermonkeydesign.com

Independent designer, letterer and illustrator, Tom Lane, was contacted earlier this year by the team at Theory11. Theory11 are a collective of the most respected artists in the magic industry and they asked Lane to develop an idea for a new deck of cards. The result was this Archangel deck, created initially by hand and then further refined in Illustrator. "I redrew the artwork in Illustrator, retaining the handmade feel with some techniques I have, but also developing it a bit more so it's tighter and has a little more finesse."

To do this, Lane uses a variety of Illustrator tools. "I predominantly use the Pen tool when I need precision and the Pencil tool for when I can be a bit more free flowing," he comments. "The ability to jump between these tools on the same path and using the Pathfinder panel to add and subtract shapes are a vital part of my digital process."

Lane firmly believes that practice makes perfect. "Mastering Illustrator will help you to produce professional artwork," he says. "If you are supplying vectors to clients or sending anything to print, for example, it's good practice to make sure it's clean and tidy. You can use the Pathfinder's subtract and add functions to cut shapes out of other shapes and group colours together. It's important to get into these good habits as soon as possible."

LOGO DESIGN
LATITUDE44 GYM

DESIGNER: DAVID JOHNSON
Client: Latitude 44
www.behance.net/thebeardedcompany

Senior designer David Johnson was recently asked to design the visual identity for a start-up gym, that focuses on old school techniques of training. Located at the foot of Mount Aspiring National Park on the South Island of New Zealand, situated on the 44-degrees latitude, the surrounding landscape provided the perfect inspiration for the company's logo. Having worked in Illustrator since the early '00s, Johnson, once again, turned to this trusty tool.

"After the initial concepts were drawn out on pencil on paper, the gems that showed promise were reproduced and refined in Illustrator, tweaking 100 variations until we got the result the client was after," says Johnson. "The advantage of artwork being vector-based enables easy and precise manipulation."

"This project was a relatively easy build, beside the Pen tool Rounded Corners was the only effect used," he says. "Experiment, there is never only one way of doing things in Illustrator. You can achieve amazing results with this program."

LOGO DESIGN
GDAYX MALAYSIA EVENT IDENTITY

DESIGNER: VALEN LIM
Client: GDayX Malaysia
www.behance.net/valenlim

Organised by Google Business Group Malaysia, GDayX Malaysia 2013 was an event that shared and discussed Google tools. Responsible for the event identity was graphic designer and illustrator Valen Lim Chong Chin, for which he used Illustrator extensively.

"Illustrator played the role as a crafting tool in this project as it is more like a sketchbook in a digital format," he comments. "Since my art style was to use flat colours, I mainly focused on the Pen tool as I can characterise my design with clean lines and precise curves with it. Pathfinder was useful too. I mostly use the Unite and Divide tool in order to create new shapes."

"Grouping elements was also very important when I started to gather different complex vector graphics. It's really helpful when I want to make minor changes as I can easily go into isolation mode and correct it. I also used Clipping Mask quite often as the visual elements of this project are mostly built on the two big circles and it cropped them perfectly in shape."

LOGO DESIGN
JUFKA BAKERY IDENTITY

DESIGNER: UROS SAVIC
Client: Jufka
www.studiosfumato.com

When graphic designer Uros Savic was asked to redesign the logo and identity for local bakery company Jufka, his main tool for doing so was Illustrator. "After a quick pencil sketch, everything was created using Adobe Illustrator," he says. "Firstly I used it to customise the typography, then create the original wheat symbol and then I combined all of the elements into one shape."

While Illustrator's toolset is extensive, Savic predominantly stuck with just two features to create this project. "The Pen and Pathfinder tools were the most important. The precision that the Pen tool allows is fantastic. And almost all instances of the Pathfinder tool were utilised. Its Unite Shapes and Minus Front features were used in most cases, for example, to create one shape from the letter F and the wheat."

When working on a project such as this, Savic advises to take things one-step at a time. "For me, the best way of working in Illustrator is using its basic tools. Advanced tools can give some great results too, but only when you are completely comfortable with the basics."

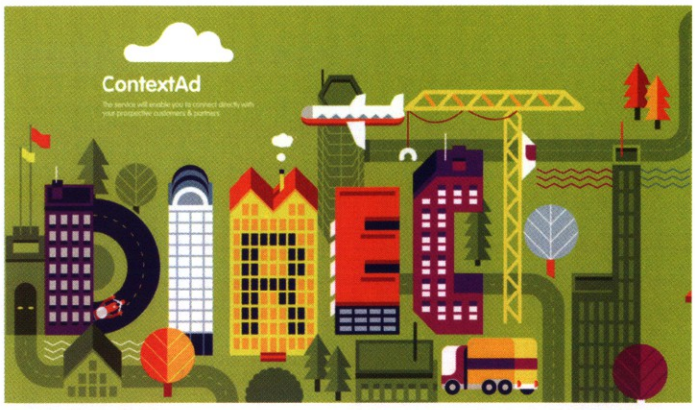
LOGO DESIGN
SLETAT LOGO

DESIGNER: ROMAN KOROLEV
Client: Sletat
www.kaer.pro

This logo design for travel service company Sletat, was created by freelance designer Roman Korolev. After numerous initial sketches, the client approved the design and Korolev took the concept into Illustrator. "I mainly used the Pen tool and, as I cannot always accurately build a curved line, the Ellipse tool also comes in very useful," he smiles.

"The logo began with the outline of the shape, which was then painted with a gradient fill," Korolev continues. "On top of the basic shape, I drew the contours of shadows, which were filled with a darker colour and given multiple blending mode. The light contours followed, assigned with overlay or screen blending mode. It was finalised with painted highlights and shadows.

The entire project was completed in Illustrator, and Korolev is always mindful of detail when working in such a way. "In projects like this, attention to detail is key," he says. "If you draw each element in Illustrator carefully, the work, on the whole, looks a lot better."



ICON & UI DESIGN

CONTEXTAD ILLUSTRATIONS

STUDIO: LOULOU & TUMMIE
Client: ContextAd
www.loulouandtummie.com

Dutch illustration duo LouLou & Tummie spend their days creating colourful graphics and characters in Illustrator. These illustrations for the HTML5 scroll animation for ContextAd (created for Freeger) are no exception. Responsible for six scenes, each suitable for animation, the pair got to work. "One of the most important things in the brief was that all the scenes needed to have a smooth transition in the animation, so we had to come up with some creative solutions to stitch them all together," says Laurens Schellekens (LouLou).

Creating all of the artwork in Illustrator, the duo stuck closely to the brief. "Everything being vector is really handy for creating the animations," says Schellekens. "We don't tend to choose specific functions for each project. While we're drawing we constantly switch between the Pen, Circle or Square tool, rotation, mirroring, skewing, pathfinder, the zigzag filter, rounded corners filter and so on."

ICON & UI DESIGN

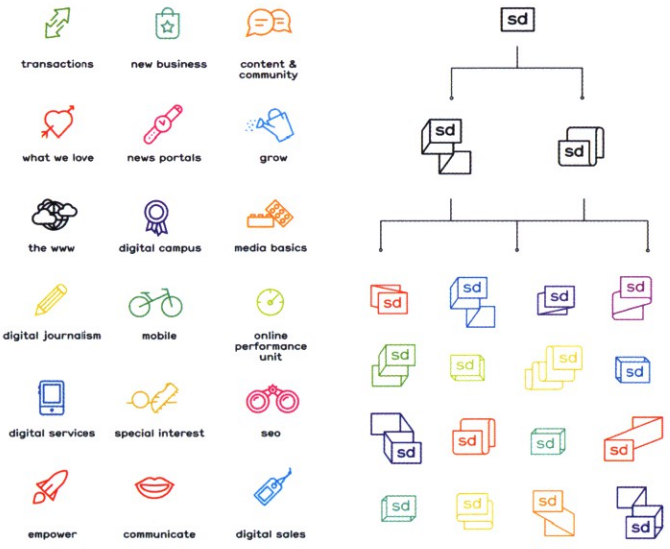
HOLIDAY FLIRT APP

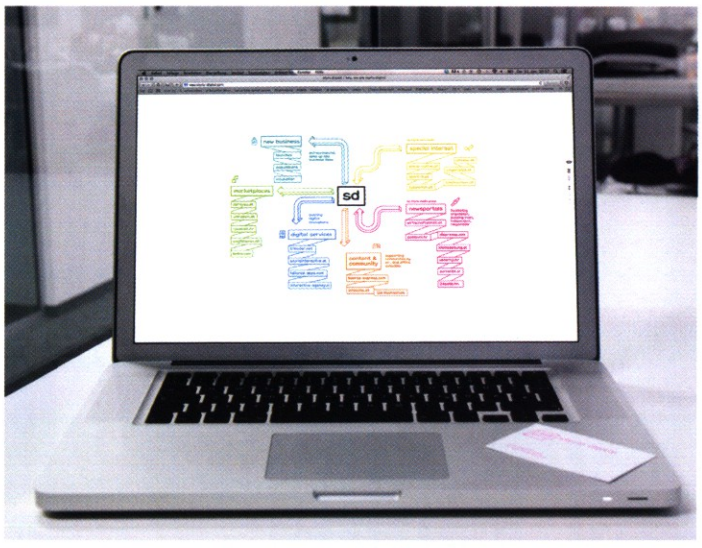
DESIGNER: RONALD HAGENSTEIN
Client: Holidayflirt
www.digitalcreative.nl

This cheeky app enables you to find flirt-matches based on geographic location, whether at home or on holiday. When its founders were looking for an illustrator to design the virtual goods for the app, they came across designer Ronald Hagenstein on Dribbble. Needing twenty illustrations, Hagenstein utilised Illustrator to draw the required icons.

"The base of the drawing is always done in illustrator, and the Pen tool was invaluable on this project," he says. "Once the drawings are finalised, it all comes together in Photoshop, where I use smart objects to keep the Illustrator files adjustable. I always choose to make the illustration very simple, so it is constructed of only one layer. That makes it much easier in Photoshop to change the base colour of the artwork."

Working on a project with multiple elements, Hagenstein ensured an organised workflow. "When working with Illustrator, making sure your work is neat is key," he says. "If you have to make a small adjustments and your file is not organised or it is filled with unnecessary layers or paths, you can easily double the amount of time it takes to fix. Sloppy jobs will kick your butt in the end."





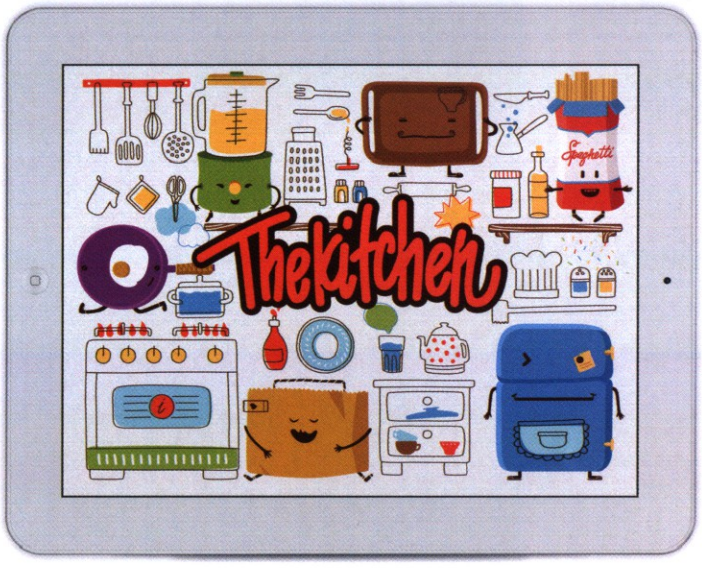
ICON & UI DESIGN
STYRIA DIGITAL IDENTITY

STUDIO: MOODLEY BRAND IDENTITY
Client: Styria Digital
www.moodley.at

Design agency Moodley Brand Identity recently created the new corporate design of Styria Digital, the bulk of which was done using Illustrator. "We created the main logo in Illustrator, the many variations of it and the whole icon palette," says designer Marie Zieger. "What was pretty nice about the workflow of this particular project was that we were able to do a lot of steps in only one piece of software."

The SD branding was based on a lot of movement and transformation and Illustrator provided the perfect creative solution. "To emphasise this dynamic, we needed to create a lot of different shapes and icons, where the Pen tool came in very handy," Zieger comments. "You could be doing the same work in InDesign, but we've always felt like working with the Pen tool in Illustrator is way more smooth and much easier to use. Also, since we worked with a lot of strokes in this project, Illustrator gives you much more control over the adjustment of angles and sizes of your shapes."

When designing for the web, such as this, Zeiger believes attention to detail is key. "Be as precise as possible," she says. "Use guides, use practical commands like duplicating shapes in a specific angle or distance. Keep your hands off moving your shapes around manually and calculate the X- and Y-positions carefully."

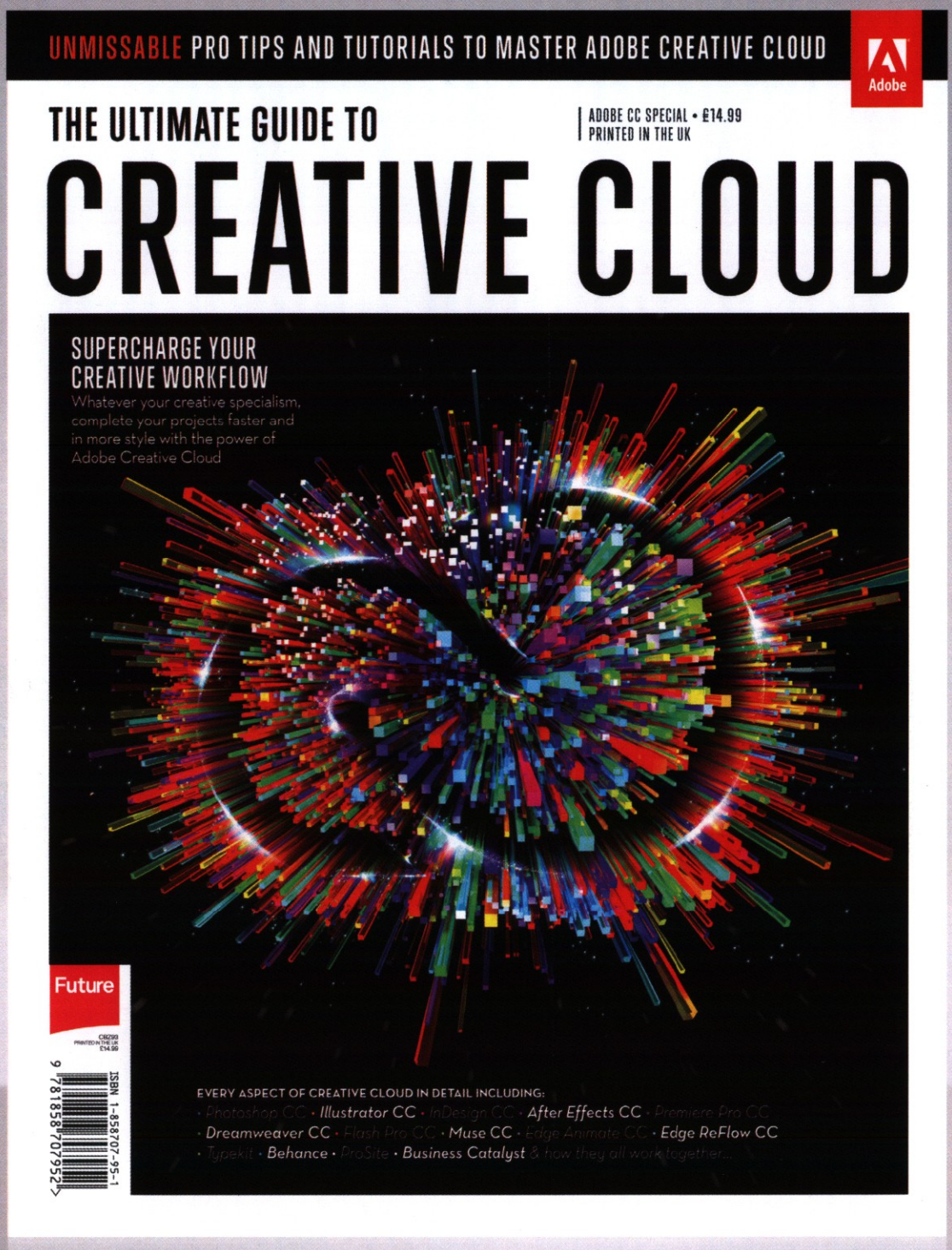


ICON & UI DESIGN
THE KITCHEN IPAD APP

STUDIO: VISUALIZERS
Client: PopAppFactory
www.visualizers.com.ua

The job of creating the colourful illustrations for kids' app The Kitchen fell at the feet of Ukrainian creative agency Visualizers. "Illustrator was the main tool on this project, the primary function being was the creation of vector characters," says designer Elena Avramenko.

In order to create the eye-catching, colourful characters, the Visualizers team used a number of Illustrator features. "The most useful tools were the Pen tool, Shape Builder, Pathfinder, Blend tool and Paintbrush. Also, there is an offset path function, which helps save a lot of time when you are building shapes with different thickness."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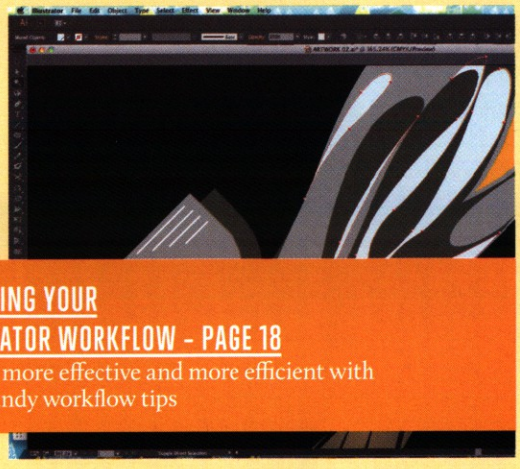
ILLUSTRATOR BEST PRACTICE

Whether you want to make your workflow more efficient, create cracking characters or design brilliant patterns, check out this range of expert tutorials

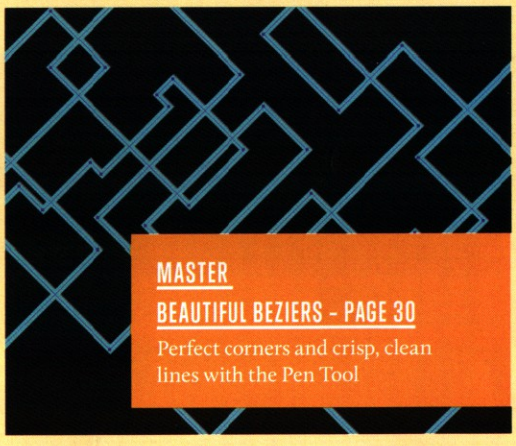


IMPROVING YOUR ILLUSTRATOR WORKFLOW - PAGE 18

Become more effective and more efficient with these handy workflow tips

ILLUSTRATOR TIPS AND TRICKS - PAGE 24

Speed up in Illustrator with these insider tricks



MASTER BEAUTIFUL BEZIERS - PAGE 30

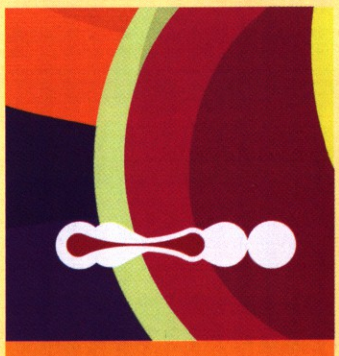
Perfect corners and crisp, clean lines with the Pen Tool

DESIGNING ABSTRACT PATTERNS - PAGE 32

Sketch on paper and then turn that concept digital

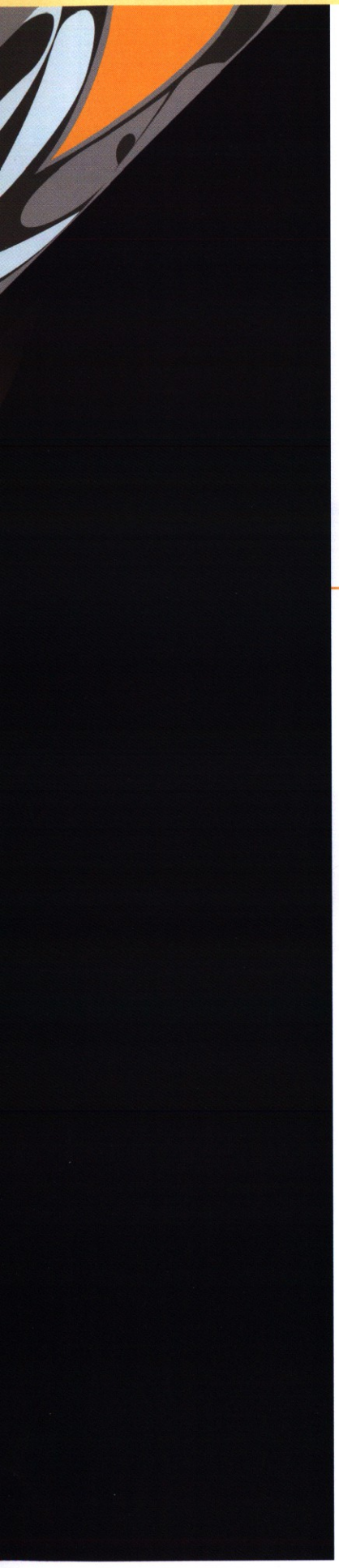
LOST IN SPACE! DESIGNING CHARACTERS - PAGE 38

Speed up your character art in Illustrator



CALLING CARD FOR YOUR BUSINESS - PAGE 44

Design stunning business cards in Illustrator



WORKFLOW KNOWLEDGE

KEY SKILLS

- The right way to plan.
- Learning shortcuts.
- Mastering the Control bar.
- Fast effects with the Blend tool.
- Managing layers effectively.

AUTHOR: Ben O'Brien
(Ben The Illustrator)

BEST PRACTICE

IMPROVE YOUR ILLUSTRATOR WORKFLOW

As creatives we must stay on top of our game. It is essential we train ourselves, improve efficiency and gain a workflow faster than the competition...

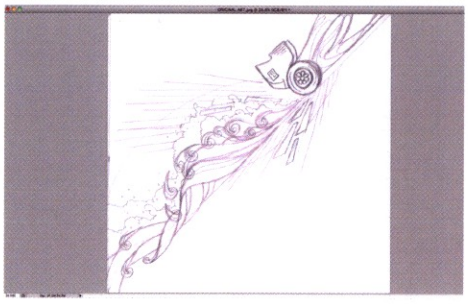
SPEED UP YOUR ILLUSTRATION WORK

Ben O'Brien, freelance illustrator, www.bentheillustrator.com

Even with all the tools perfectly mastered in Adobe Illustrator there is always more scope for improvement. By focusing on how we use tools, and how the varied resources come together in an efficient, well-managed workflow we can get better at using this software. This tutorial runs through a series of tips and techniques which can aid your workflow, speed-up your illustration work and fine-tune the common processes and techniques. We all face tight deadlines or perhaps want to quickly create something in-between other tasks. Whatever the project may be, having the ability to work efficiently in Illustrator means accomplishing more in a day. And it enables us to condense the budget into less working hours and in the long-run being able to produce even more great work. Accelerating your workflow doesn't mean rushing. It's not about completing work as quickly as possible, it's about maximising the productivity of your working time.

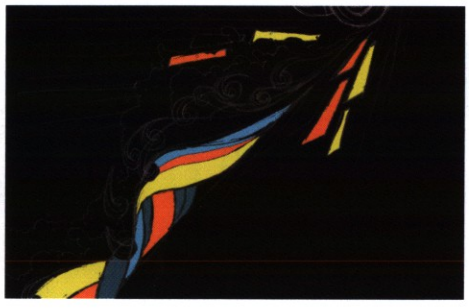
IMPROVE YOUR ILLUSTRATOR WORKFLOW

Being organised and savvy with Illustrator will speed you up and make you more efficient...



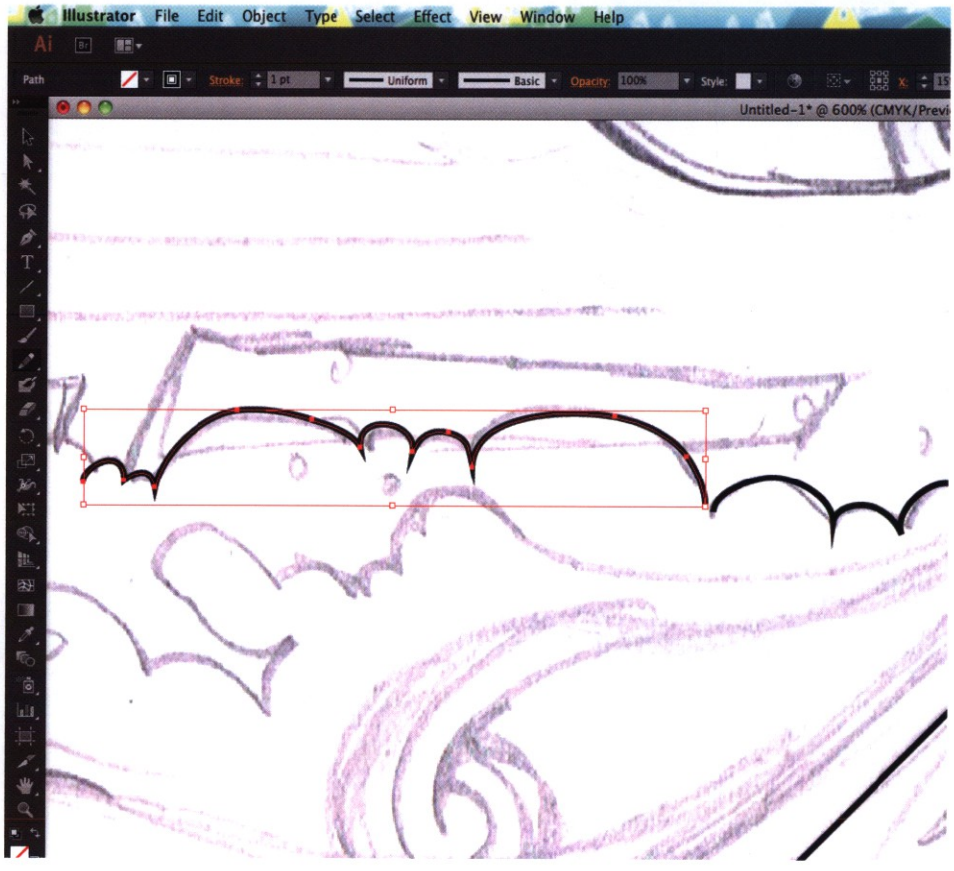
1 Plan for the future

Always start your illustration work with a pencil drawing. From the outset you should aim to produce a clean, finished sketch assuring that no time will be wasted later in Illustrator. So plan everything out, draw every detail, perfect the composition and ask your client to sign it off before you even get into Illustrator.



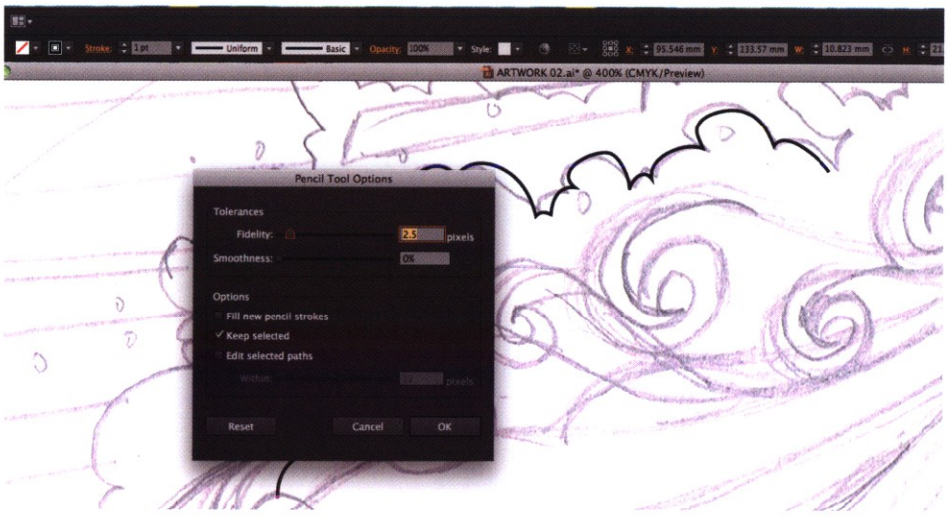
2 The future is colourful

As great as Illustrator is for finding the perfect colour palette, an efficient workflow doesn't necessarily allow for hours of colouring. While planning your artwork think ahead to colours, envisage it finished and coloured up. If you're working for a client run your colour plans by them – they'll appreciate the foresight.



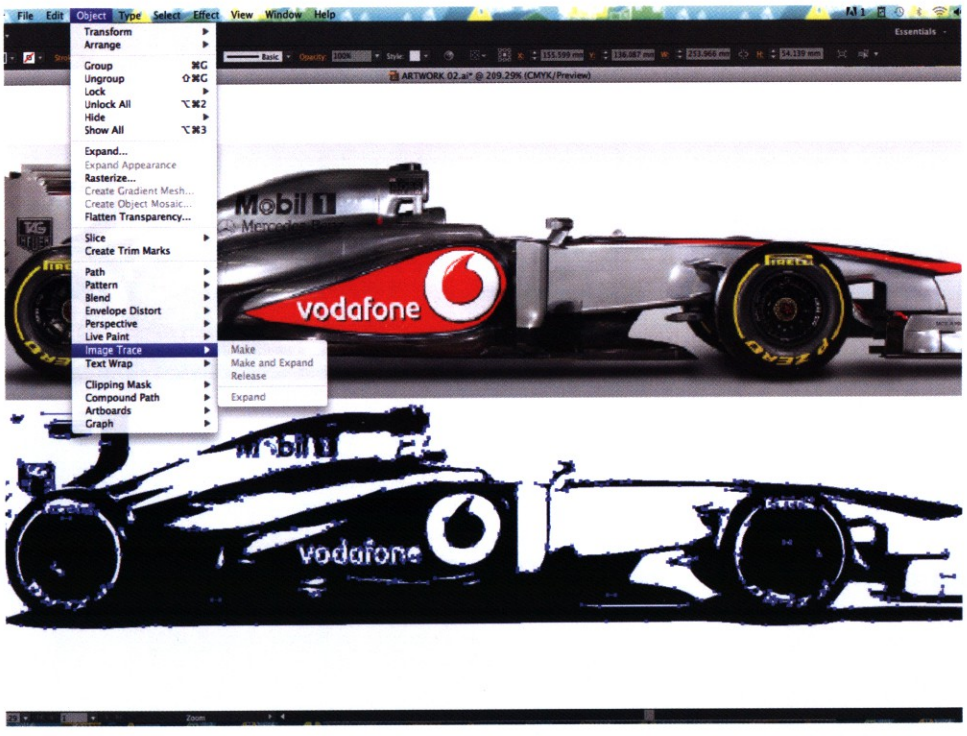
3 Know your tracing tools

If you're creating linework, tracing your scanned pencil drawing, then be sure to know which tool is most efficient to achieve your required style. The Pen Tool (although it is perfectly precise) can be quite time-consuming. If you're looking for quick smooth lines then the pencil tool can be a speedier option.



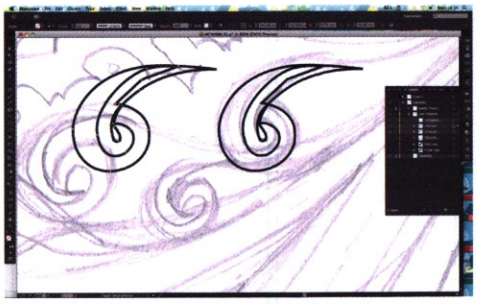
4 Set the right tracing options

To achieve efficient tracing of your drawing, set your options (double-click the Pencil Tool) to Fidelity 2.5 pixels, Smoothness O per cent and de-select 'Edit selected paths'. This can really slow you down – if you draw a path within the pixel limit specified in the option below, the original path will be deleted. It's a must-change option when tracing. Also, ensure 'Keep selected' stays ticked, in case you need to delete the previous path drawn. The path will be automatically deselected when you start drawing your next path.



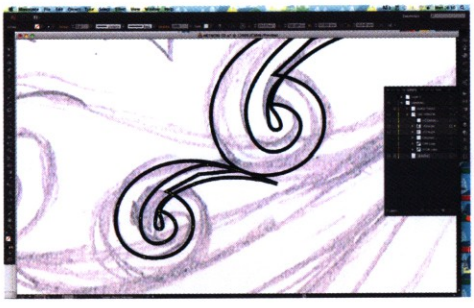
5 Automatic tracing

If your artwork is right for it, then Illustrator's Image Trace function can be incredibly useful and efficient. Place your scanned drawing or a photo onto your Artboard, select it and click Object >Image Trace>Make and Expand. Illustrator will convert the image into vectors that can then be edited.



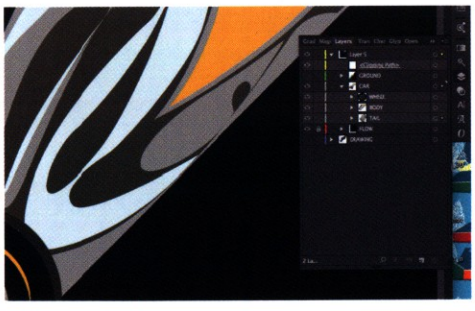
6 Copy and paste with haste

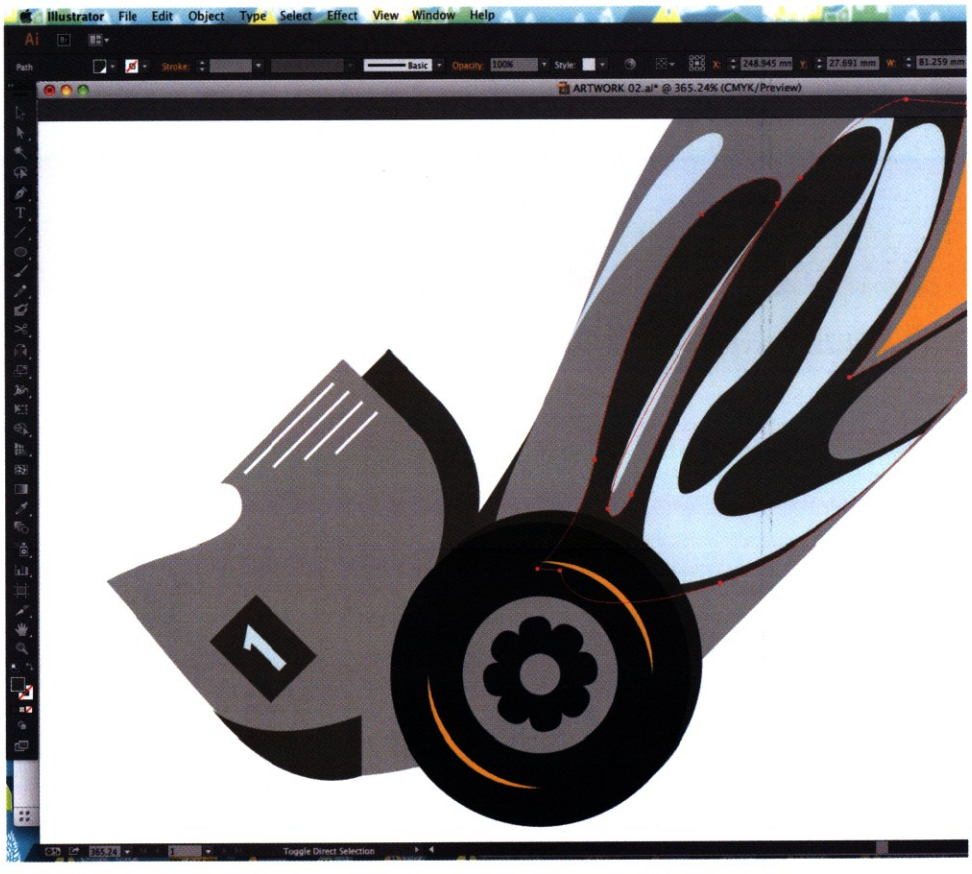
Copying and pasting goes further with Illustrator. If you have repetitive elements, create the linework once, select it all together and group it (Cmd/Ctrl+G). Click the Direct Selection Tool and hold down the Opt/Alt key, select and drag a copy of the Group, or hold Opt/Alt + Shift to drag a copy aligned to the original.



7 Copy, paste and adjust

Still with your object selected, holding down the Shift key enables you to resize the object while keeping it in proportion or rotate it. Together these keys enable you to re-create an element over and over, resizing and rotating as you go. Enabling you to easily create a multitude of variations on the original.




Illustrator File Edit Object Type Select Effect View Window Help
ARTWORK 02.ai* @ 365.24% (CMYK/Preview)
Toggle Direct Selection

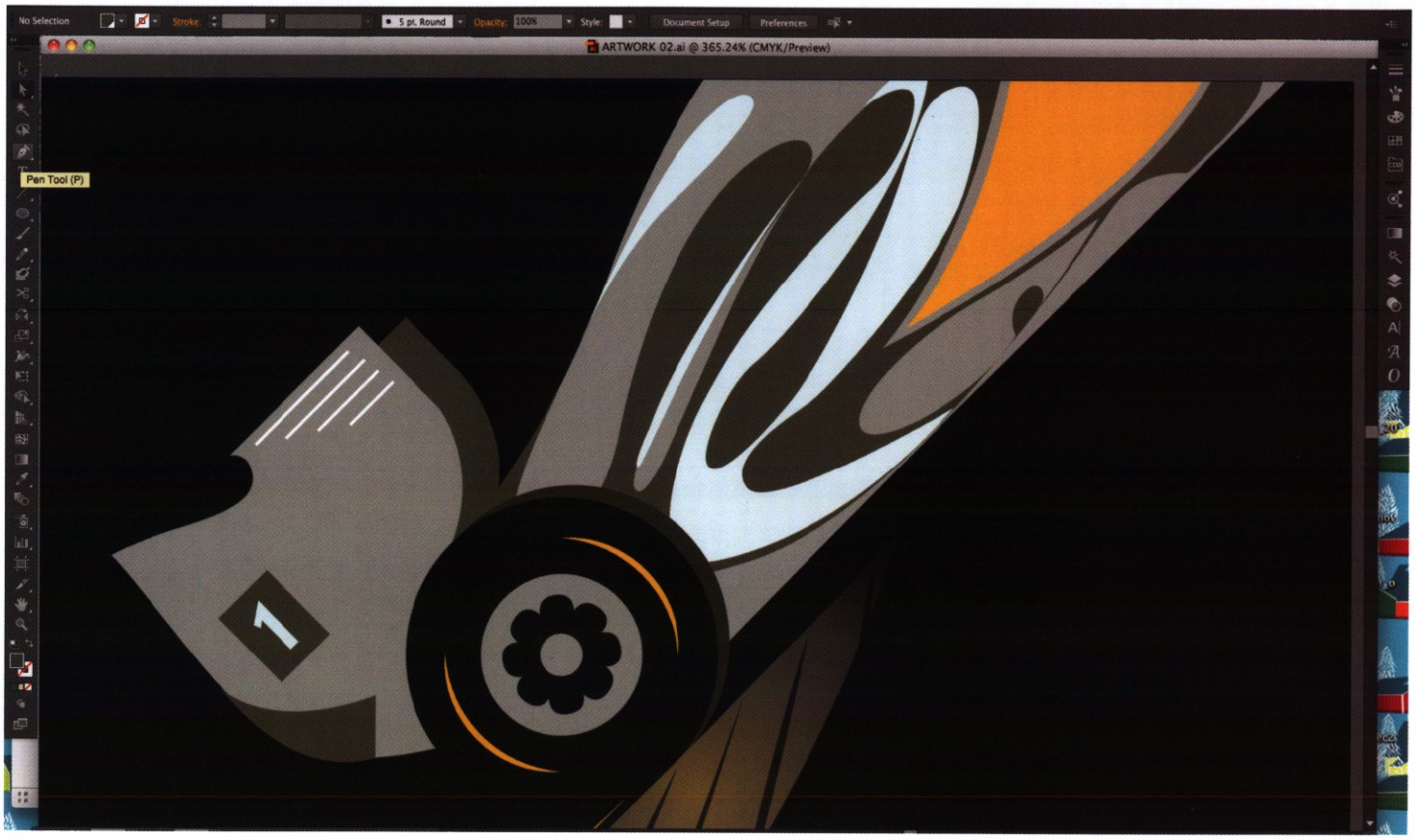
8 Labelling layers for later

To shape up your workflow, it's important to keep things in order and label your layers and object groups in the Layers panel. This can really enhance your workflow when you have to go back and amend specific elements within an illustration, perhaps after client feedback – preparing yourself for fast editing later.

9 Move fast between tools

You can deny it as much as you like but it is a well known fact that we all lose a lot of time clicking between tools. While working, it is good practice to remember that whatever tool you are using, holding down the Cmd/Ctrl key converts it into the Direct Selection Tool. One of the time-saving tips many professionals use is to get into the habit of working with one hand hovering over the keyboard. They are then perfectly poised to swing into action hitting any such buttons as required to make the most of the time-saving benefits shortcuts offer and keep everything moving swiftly and smoothly.

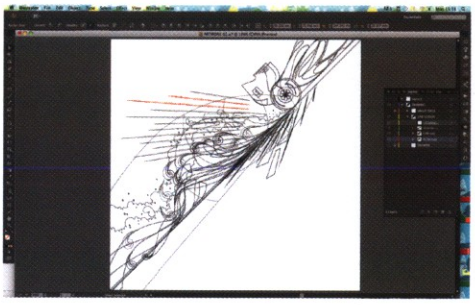
IMPROVE YOUR ILLUSTRATOR WORKFLOW CONTINUED...



10 Shortcuts are there for shorter cutting

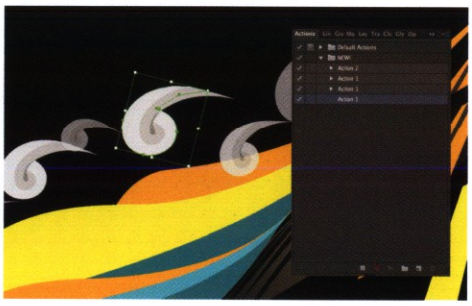
If you don't know the shortcuts for every tool you use, you're working much slower than you could be. While illustrating, every time you go back to the Tools panel to choose a tool, you could be just hitting the shortcut, so check what the shortcut is and remember it. This will save you hours of time over a project.

> "The Control bar changes contextually as you use different tools – offering the ability to perform common functions associated with that tool without wading through various dialogs and menus."



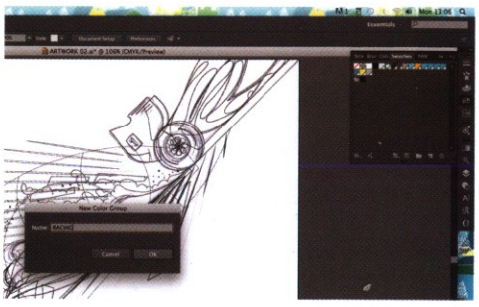
11 Learn the Control bar

The Control bar changes contextually as you use different tools – offering the ability to perform common functions associated with that tool without wading through various dialogs and menus. So for instance, you can quickly change a stroke width and colour without opening those two panels.



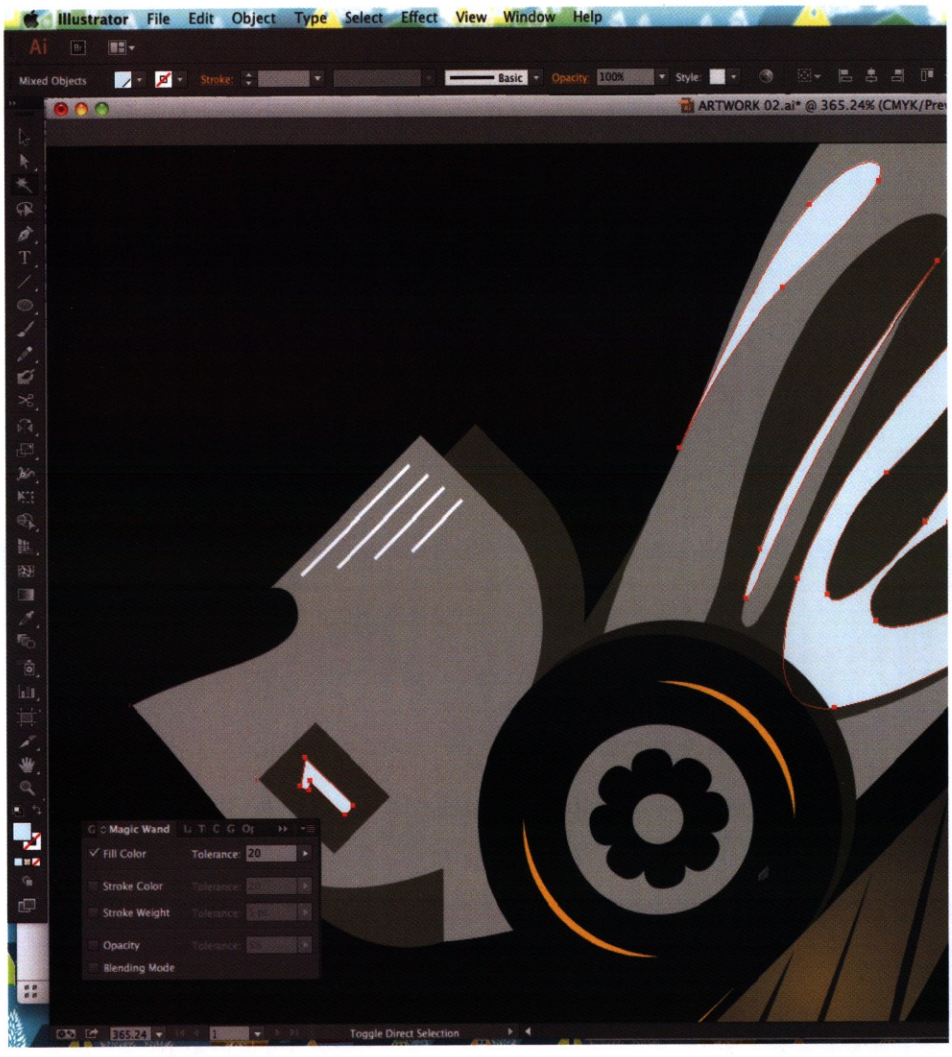
12 Prepare for action

Any process can be made into an Action. Go to Window>Actions, choose New Action from the panel menu and name your action. Once you click Record, every thing you do will be recorded. Then hit Stop Recording. Now if you select another element you can Play that action and have it applied to the new



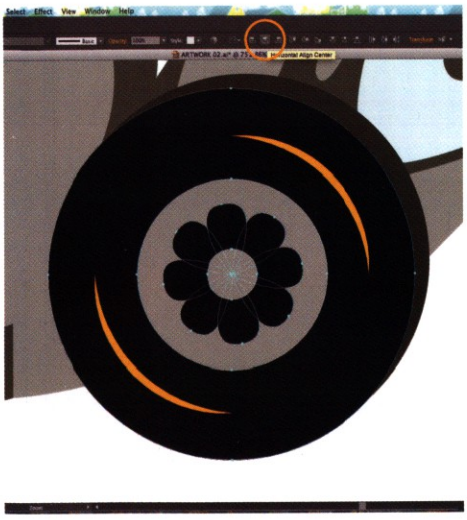
13 Saving your colours

If you're producing a series of work, in a specific style, you can speed up the colouring process by putting together Colour Groups (a Colour Group is a folder to put swatches in). Just click the 'New Colour Group' icon at the bottom of the Swatches panel, then drag the required colours into the folder.



14 Ignore the Select menu

You can use the Select menu to select all elements of the same colour, stroke, opacity and so on. This is a slow method of working. It's so much faster to open up the Magic Wand panel (Window>Magic Wand) and select the Magic Wand itself from the Tool panel. This is a much quicker process, especially while choosing colours or effects for multiple elements. All these little shortcuts may seem like you are only saving literally a tenth of a second but when you are working on a big project they all add up to save you a lot of time. Half an hour saved through being more efficient is half an hour gained on something else!

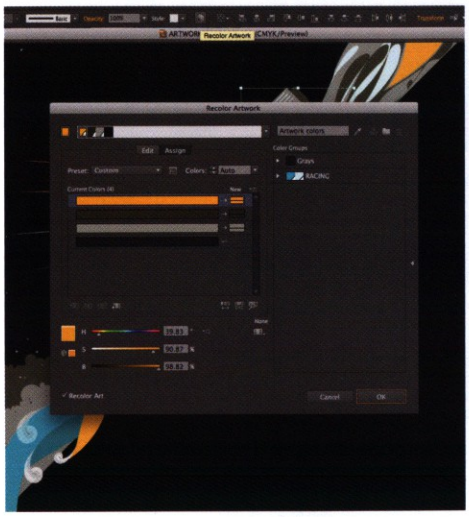


17 Alignment is everything

With most graphic illustration or design work, you'll need elements to be perfectly placed and aligned. The smartest and swiftest way to do this, with the elements requiring alignment selected, is to use the Alignment keys on the Control bar. They appear automatically when you have two or more elements selected and will perfectly align your elements to one side or on a central (horizontal or vertical) axis.

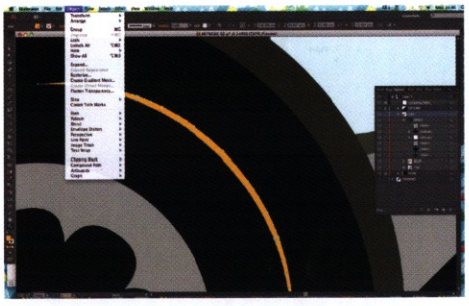
18 Efficient effects

Some of the simplest tools and effects in Illustrator can have a great impact, one of which is the Blend Tool. The Blend Tool can create a series of lines between any two objects, blending one to another. Choose the Blend tool (W) and click each of the two lines, and the blend will automatically be created. By double-clicking the Blend Tool icon in the Tools panel you can adjust the settings as required.



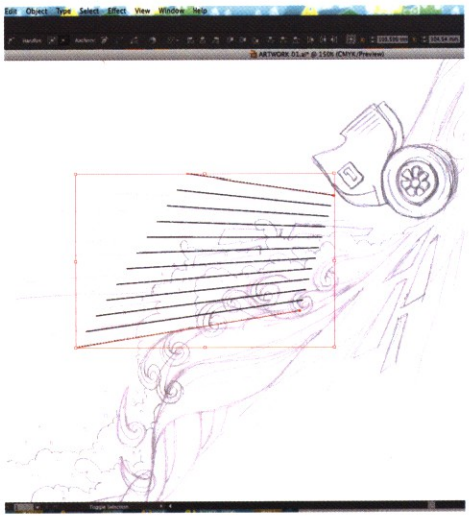
15 Changing an entire colour palette

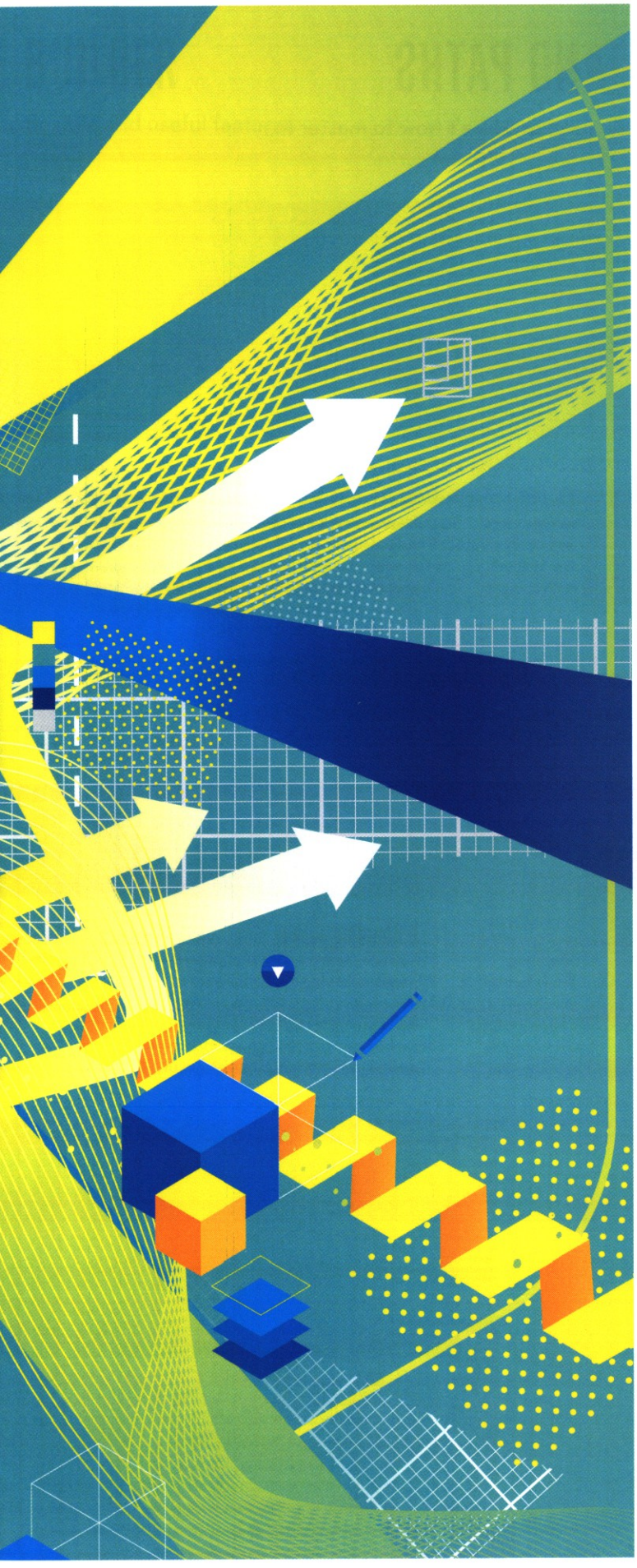
If you have any objects selected on the Artboard, there will be a small colour-wheel icon appear on the Control Bar labelled 'Recolour Artwork'. It is useful to be able to change all uses of one or all colours in one go. If you select every element in an image, you can apply a new colour palette to your artwork.



16 Expand to accelerate

When colouring an artwork that will keep its linework, convert your lines to fills either by using Object>Path> Outline Stroke or Object>Expand Appearance. Once converted to fills, you now only have to colour fills throughout the whole illustration, rather than clicking between lines and fills.





ILLUSTRATOR TRICKS

KEY SKILLS

- Mastering the Pen tool.
- Using the Pathfinder and Shape Builder features.
- Fast ways to apply effects.
- Making the most of shortcuts.

AUTHOR: Luke O'Neill

CORE SKILLS

ESSENTIAL ILLUSTRATOR TRICKS

Luke O'Neill runs through 36 of his top time-saving Illustrator tips and tricks to maximise your output and creativity. You can't afford to miss them...

WORK SMARTER, NOT HARDER

Luke O'Neill, Art Editor, T3, www.t3.com

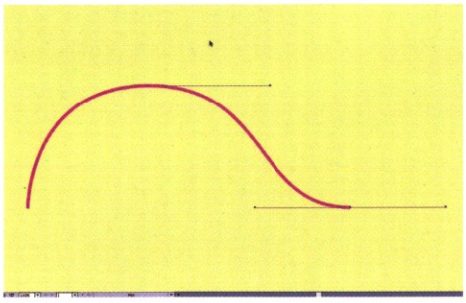
To the uninitiated, getting to grips with Illustrator can seem like a daunting task. Unlike Photoshop which works in a more organic fashion, Illustrator is a precision tool that often requires very specific commands to be carried out to achieve the desired results.

With pressures increasingly being put on the working designer's time, it's essential that we work as fast and effectively as possible, leaving more time for creativity. Over the next few pages I'll run through 36 of my top tips for working quickly and effectively in Illustrator.

Whether you're new to the app or a long time Illustrator user, these workflow tips should prove to be an indispensable guide for maximising your creative output. Flick over to get started.

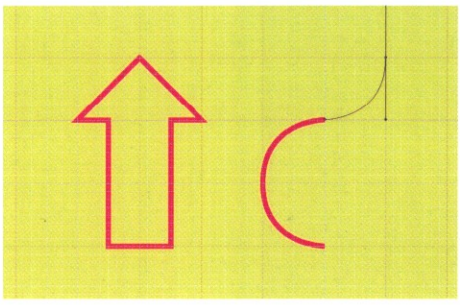
THE PEN TOOL AND PATHS

The Pen tool is fundamental to Illustrator success. Here's how to master it...



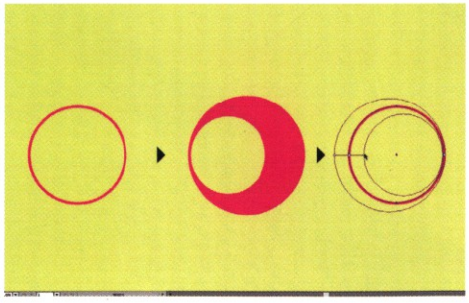
1 Basic Beziers

Lets start with the fundamental tool in Illustrator – the Pen tool. The key when creating Bezier curves is to make them as smooth as possible whilst creating as few points as possible (the more points then the bigger the file). Click and drag the anchor points carefully to ensure a smooth and fluid curve.



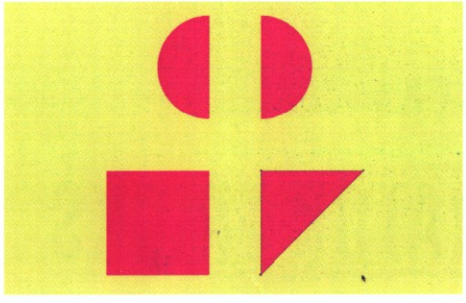
2 Snapping to grid

By showing the grid (View>Grid or Cmd/Ctrl+") and then selecting Snap to Grid from the View menu (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+") you can quickly and easily create very precise vector shapes. By holding Shift you can ensure that you can quickly create both straight-edged and curved paths



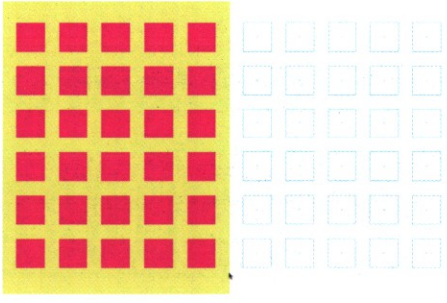
3 Width Tool

The Width tool is a fairly recent addition to Adobe Illustrator. Whereas before you might resort to drawing two parallel paths to create a line that varies in width, here you can simply click on any given point and manually adjust the width. Select the Width tool from the Tool bar and click and drag on a path.



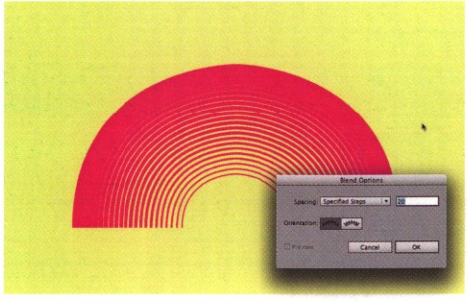
4 Add and cut points

Hit '-' with the Pen tool selected to quickly delete an anchor point, '+' to add an anchor point and 'c' for the scissors tool to cut a closed path. Above I've created two semi-circles from a circle by using the scissor tool and a triangle from a square by deleting one corner anchor point. Simple.



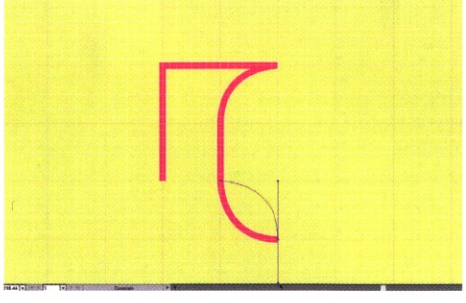
5 Convert paths to guides

People often bemoan the lack of grid editing capabilities in Illustrator, but a little know fact is that you can create guides from any vector shapes – just hit Cmd/Ctrl+5. Here, I've created a basic modular grid but as any path can be converted to a guide, there's no reason you can't have diagonal guides.



6 Blending paths

You can quickly create some interesting effects to populate a design by drawing two paths, selecting them both and going to Object>Blend>Blend Options. Here, I've used two different paths varying in weight and chosen Specified Steps = 20. Then simply hit Opt/Alt+Cmd/Ctrl+B to see the results.

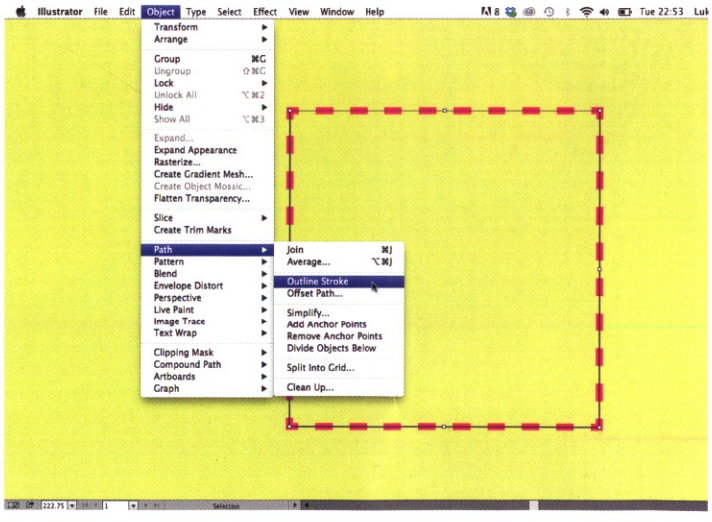


7 Quickly edit anchor points

A neat little trick for speed of drawing with the Pen tool is to, when creating a new point, hold the spacebar. This enables you to reposition the anchor point. Once you're happy with the position you can then hold Cmd/Ctrl to switch to the Direct Selection tool to quickly edit the handle and angle of the curve.

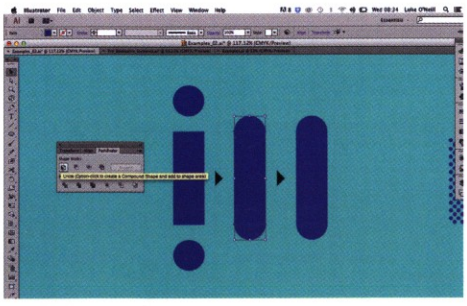
8 Outlining and expanding

By navigating to Object>Path>Outline Stroke you can turn any path into an object that is editable in the same way as any other solid object. For more complex vector shapes it may be necessary to expand the object's appearance and then ungroup (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+G) and then separate elements before outlining them.



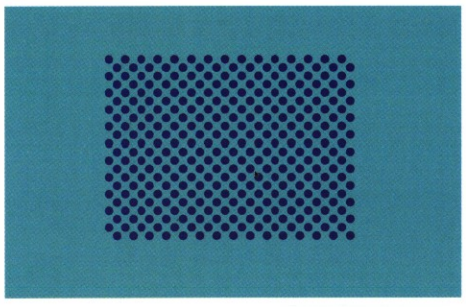
PATHFINDER AND SHAPE BUILDER

Discover how to quickly build compound shapes with these flexible and useful features



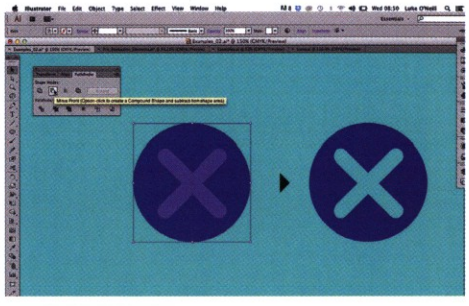
1 Building basic shapes

The Pathfinder panel is the core of all shape-building in Illustrator. Let's start by looking at the Unite function. If you have two shapes and select them both then this function will make them act as one object. This makes it very quick and easy to build more complex shapes from the basic shape tools.



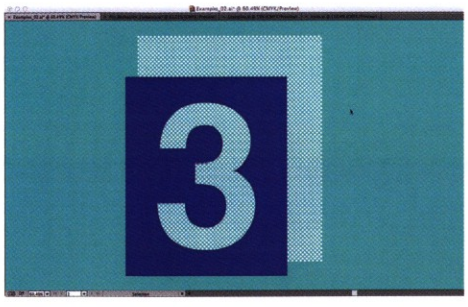
2 Uniting for speed

It's a good idea to get into the practice of using the Unite function to unify pattern-based objects. If we populated a large artboard with the above spot pattern, we would end up with hundreds of separate vector shapes which will eventually start to slow down AI. By uniting them all, they then act as one object.



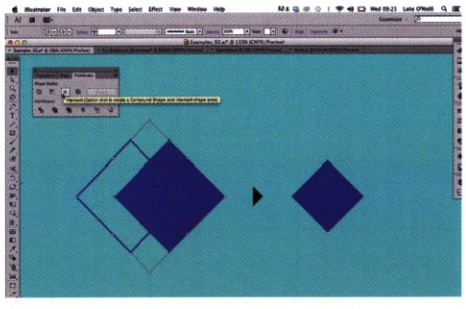
3 Basic subtraction

The Minus Front function, formerly known as Subtract is fairly self-explanatory and simply subtracts the top shape from the below shape. Very useful for creating quick cut-outs and for clearing large parts of a design. The Minus Back function found in the bottom-right of the panel behaves in the opposite way.



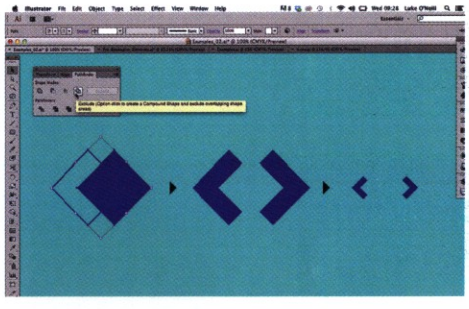
4 Subtraction shield effects

In the above example we duplicated the dot pattern and then 'united' all the dots so that they act as one shape. We drew a large rectangle over the top, typed a '3' and went to Type>Create Outlines. We can then subtract it from the rectangle, creating a window through to the dot pattern below.



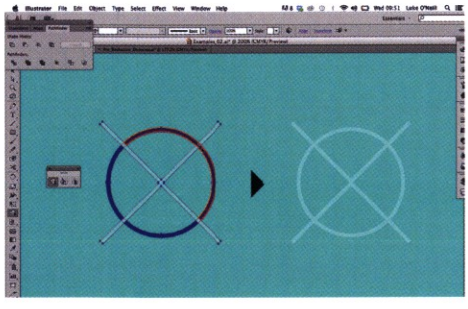
5 Intersecting shapes

The Intersect function in the Pathfinder reduces two shapes to only the overlapping area. In the example above you can see a smaller diamond shape that has been created from two overlapping and rotated square shapes. Intersect is very useful for quickly creating accurate geometric patterns.



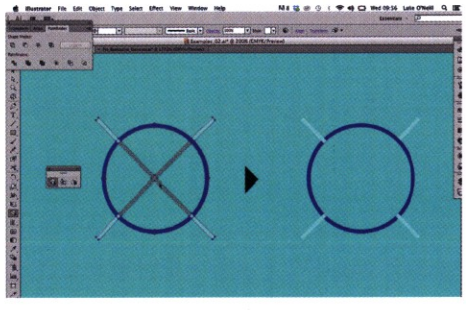
6 Exclusion zone

The Exclude function works in a similar way, except it subtracts the overlapping area of two shapes. This can be a useful way to create quick navigational icons. Above, we've used Exclude, then ungrouped the resulting objects, decreased them in size and moved them apart to create two horizontal arrow icons.



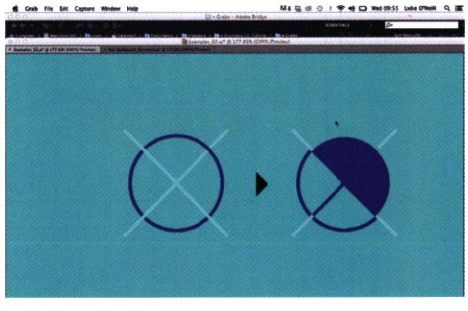
7 Shape Builder

A recent addition to Illustrator is the Shape Builder tool. Rather than having to use the Pathfinder (which can be a little confusing) the Shape Builder enables you to select two objects and combine them simply by clicking the Shape Builder tool and drawing a line between the two.



8 Subtracting with Shape Builder

You can just as easily subtract elements from overlapping shapes using the Shape Builder tool by holding Opt/Alt and then hovering over an area – or by drawing a line between the two. This makes shape-building on the fly quick and intuitive.

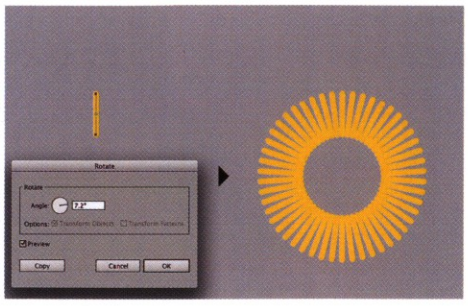


8 Anything goes...

The real beauty of the Shape Builder tool is that it enables you to add or subtract not only solid objects, but also intersecting areas and negative space between different objects. This opens up a whole new world in efficient shape building – really, it does!

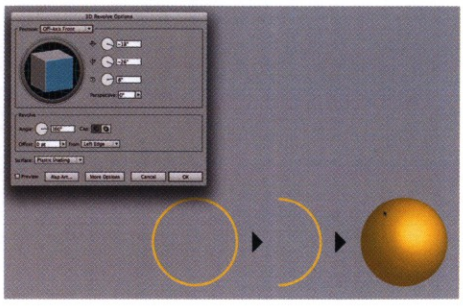
THE ART OF EFFECTS

Tips and tricks for boosting your effects work...



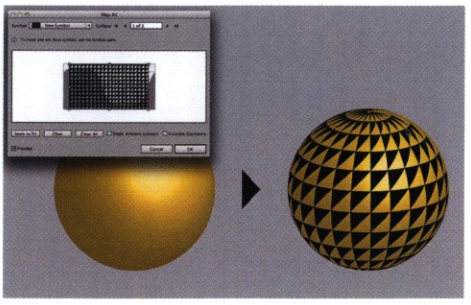
1 Radial repeat

To create a radial effect, choose a graphic and hit 'R' for rotate. Holding Opt/Alt click on where you'd like you centre point to be and then enter a fraction into the Rotate dialog box. In this case it was 360/50. Preview the repeat and then hit Copy. Now simply hit Cmd/Ctrl+D repeatedly. Almost like magic!



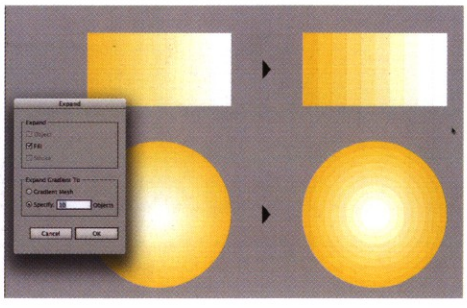
2 Create a 3D sphere

This is a simple trick. Draw a perfect circle with a stroke using the Ellipse tool whilst holding Shift. Use the Scissors tool to cut the anchor points at the top and bottom and then delete the left-hand side. Go to Effect>3D>Revolve and preview the results to reveal your perfect 3D sphere.



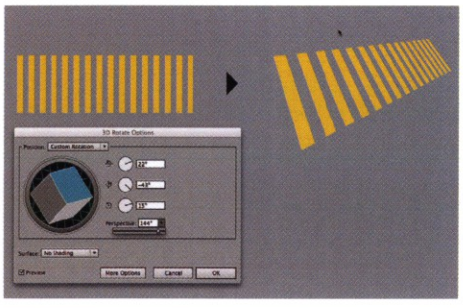
3 Mapping artwork

Once you've created your 3D shape it's easy to wrap artwork around it by clicking on the Map Artwork button found in the 3D Revolve dialog box. You choose a symbol to map – in this case I've created a custom pattern. Resize the artwork in the window and preview the results until you're happy.



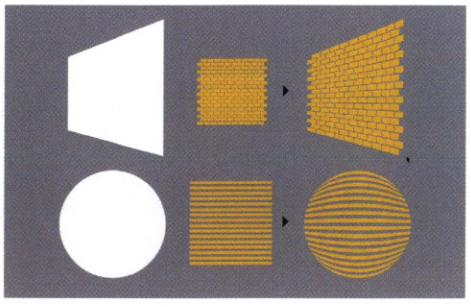
4 Expanding gradients

A little-known trick in Illustrator is that you can expand gradients to increasing variables of solid colour – thus saving lots of time in creating a graphic, graduated effect. This works with both linear and radial gradients. Simply select the object and go to Object>Expand, then choose the amount of objects to expand to.



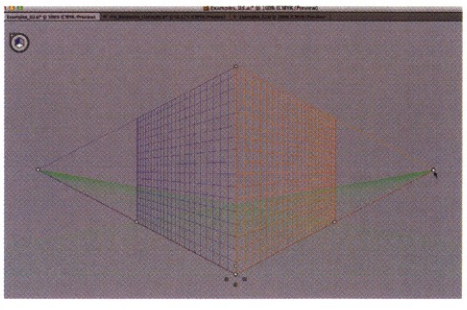
5 3D Rotate

The 3D Rotate feature found in the Effects menu is a quick and easy way to add depth and perspective to flat vector shapes. Simply check the preview box and rotate the cube and adjust perspective until you're happy. You can re-edit the effect at any time by clicking it in the Appearance panel.



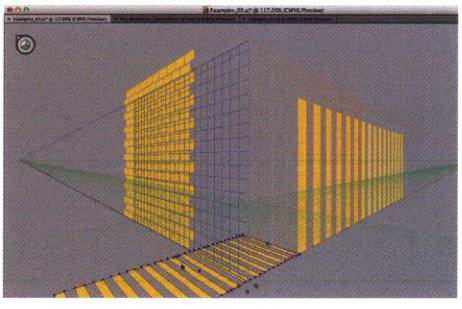
6 Envelope Distort

An alternative to the 3D Rotate tool (and one that is slightly more intuitive to use) is the Envelope Distort feature. Draw a shape that you'd like your pattern or object to warp to and go to Object>Envelope Distort> Make with Top Object. As you can see, the results can be very effective for simulating perspective.



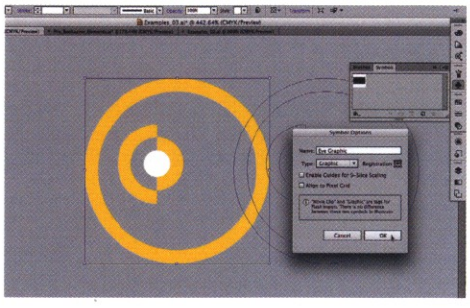
7 Perspective Grid

Whilst we're talking perspective, the most effective tool for precision perspective is the Perspective Grid. Go to the Tool bar and click on the tool to display the grid. You can then adjust the perspective using the handles until you're satisfied (or edit the grid further by going to View>Perspective Grid>Define Grid).



8 Adding to the grid

Once your grid is set up, use the Perspective Selection tool to drag graphics onto the grid – making sure that you have the appropriate plane selected using the reference cube (floating top-left by default). A new addition to Illustrator CC is the ability to hit ESC to hide the perspective grid.

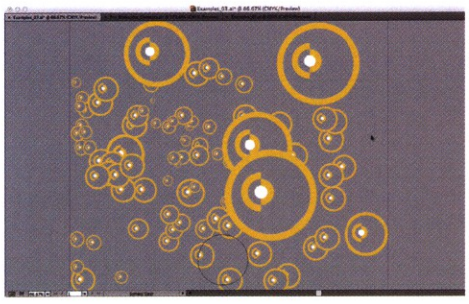


9 Quickly populate a design

The Symbols panel – that we briefly touched on earlier – can prove invaluable in quickly populating your design with multiple elements whilst not bloating file size. Design an object and then drag it into the Symbols panel. Name it and ensure that 'Graphic' and not 'Movie Clip' is selected.

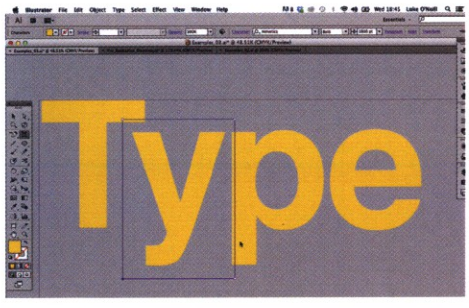
SHORTCUTS AND TRICKS

Here's some shortcuts and AI tricks you may not know...



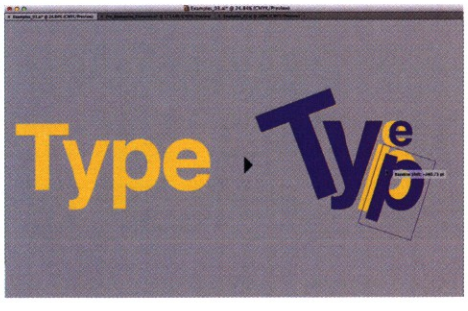
10 Symbol spraying

Now select the Symbol Sprayer tool and begin to liberally distribute your chosen graphic around the canvas. Use the Symbol Sizer tool to increase the size of the graphics (or decrease by holding Opt/Alt). There are also options for shifting, scrunching, rotating and staining your symbol instances.



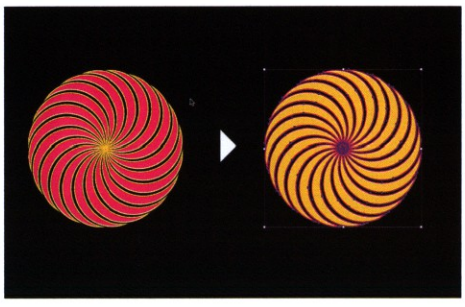
11 Touching type

A nice little addition to Illustrator CC is the ability to manipulate 'live type' in a non-destructive manner – without the need to outline the text. Set some type in your document and then from the Type tool flyout in the tool bar, select the Touch Type tool and select a character in your word.



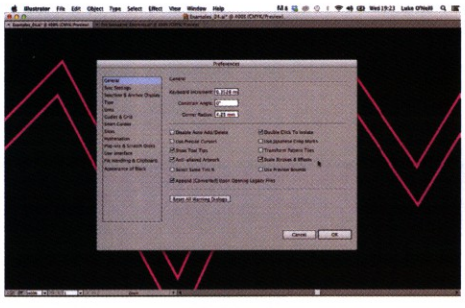
12 Adjust type on the fly

You're able to select individual characters, resize them, rotate them and move them all within the text frame. This may not seem all that, but since the type remains live (rather than being an outlined object) you can still kern, track or edit it in the way you normally would live text. See page 72 for more on this tool.



1 Toggle between fill and stroke colour

In terms of efficient workflow it's essential to know some quick keyboard shortcuts – they'll shave hours off a big job. Let's start with a basic one that you'll find yourself using all the time when designing or illustrating. Toggle between the fill and stroke colour by simply hitting 'Shift+X'.

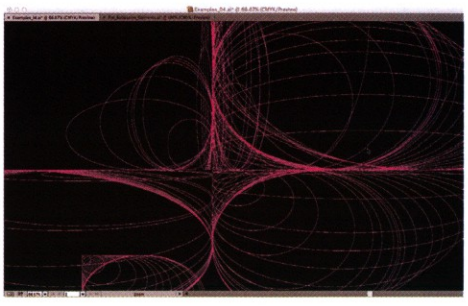


3 Scale Strokes and Effects

By default Illustrator does not scale strokes and effects – meaning that a 1pt stroke will remain 1pt even if you increase the shape size dramatically. You could expand and outline of course, but if you want the paths to remain as paths, go to Preferences>General and check the Scale Strokes and Effects box.

5 Kuler integration

Another great addition to Illustrator CC is the integration of Adobe Kuler (Window>Kuler). This enables you to sync your colour themes and makes them immediately accessible in Illustrator (without the need to set up a new colour scheme in the Swatches panel every time). See page 88 for more.

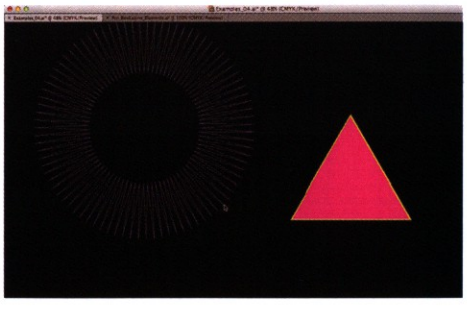


2 Tilde patterns

A little-known trick when drawing shapes is to hold down the Tilde key (~) whilst clicking and dragging to create some wacky, yet effective, designs. Background patterns can be created in no time this way. The above pattern was created using the Ellipse tool (but you can use any of the shape tools).

4 Recolour artwork

The Recolour Artwork panel enables you to intuitively and easily recolour artwork without the need to select individual objects. You can target individual colours and even import colour groups from the Swatches panel. It's a very handy tool and you can find in the Control bar.



6 Increase shape sides on the fly

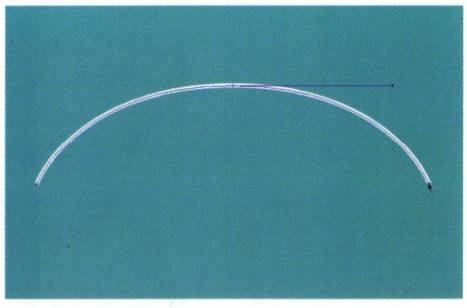
Finally, a neat little trick when using the Star or Polygon tool is to use the up and down arrow keys whilst clicking and holding to increase or decrease the number of sides on the fly (whilst still drawing). The examples above are both created using the Star tool. Very useful.

MASTER THE PEN TOOL FOR A LIGHTNING-FAST WORKFLOW

Harness the power of the Pen tool in Illustrator and you'll be a master of perfect paths, creative curves and oustanding objects. Luke O'Neill reveals all he knows...

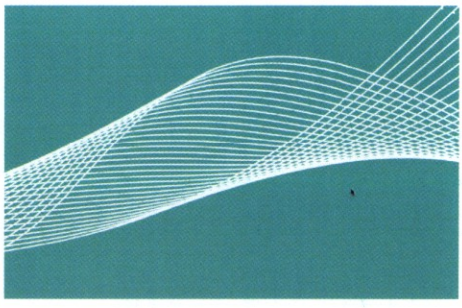
Illustrator is based upon plotting a series of anchor points to create paths or vectors that when joined together result in shapes and objects that are the building blocks of all image creation work. At the core of all path-creation in Illustrator is the Pen tool – and although it may be quick to get to grips with, it can take time to master and finesse your technique.

Through this tutorial we'll run through the fundamentals of the Pen tool from basic path creation to smooth Bezier curves and efficient workflow through the use of keyboard shortcuts. We'll also cover a number of tools that, although not found directly within the Pen tool group, work hand-in-hand with the Pen tool for a seamless vector workflow.



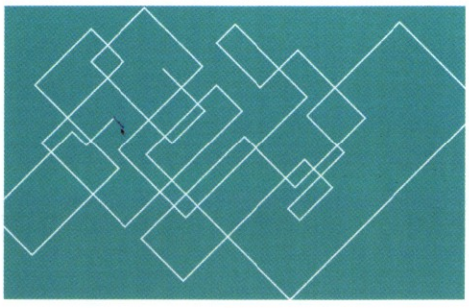
1 Creating natural curves

It's simple to create natural looking curves with the Pen tool by ensuring that Snap To Grid is turned on and by plotting points that have equal distance between the handles. Once you've created your first curve click once – and as long as the distance is equal, then Illustrator will match the curve on the opposite side. That's the basics...



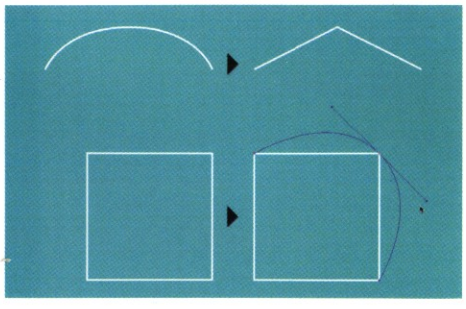
2 Freeform Bezier curves

There's no easy way to ensure beautiful Bezier curves - practice makes perfect. However, there are some rules. Create as few anchor points as possible and click and hold to adjust the curvature. Let Illustrator do the work by letting the curve flow on naturally by clicking and holding rather than single-clicking and letting the curve come to an abrupt stop.



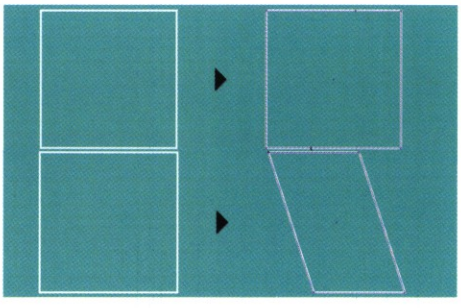
3 Drawing at right angles

If you hold down Shift while plotting points with the Pen tool enables you to constrain the curve to 45 or 90 degree angles. This can be useful when drawing both flowing lines or straight-edged lines. This handy feature also makes creating vertical, horizontal and diagonal (as shown above) much easier than it otherwise may be.



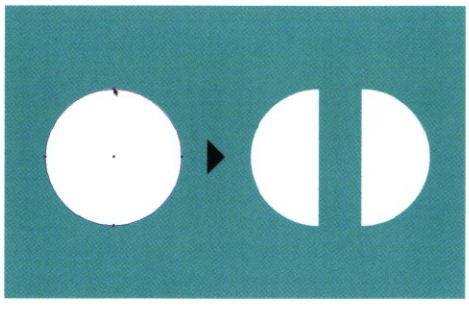
4 Edit existing paths

The convert anchor (Shift+C) point is a useful little tool that enables you to change the nature of a path. It enables you to create straight paths from curved paths. All you need to do is simply click once and you can create curves from straight edged paths by clicking and dragging. This tool can be really handy for creating ellipse shapes for example.



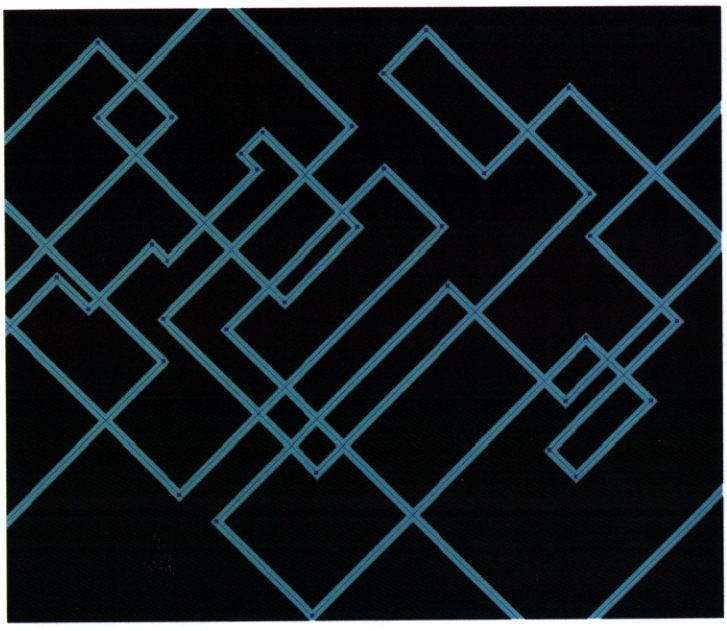
5 Add and delete anchor points

The Add and Delete Anchor Point tools are useful when quickly editing basic shapes. You can create simple shapes by using the Add Anchor Point tool. It can be useful when adding points on opposite sides of the shape, like the square in the example. You can then use the Delete Anchor point tool to delete the adjacent corner points to create a quick parallelogram.

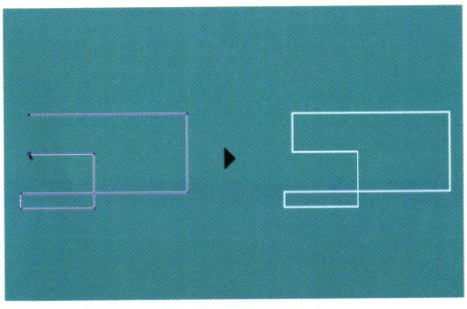


6 Cutting anchor points

Although not found directly in the Pen tool group, the Scissors tool (C) is a powerful tool when editing paths and essential in speeding up your Pen tool workflow. Once you've created a closed path, use the Scissors tool to click on an anchor point to cut it at that point. Essentially, this tool can be used to slice simple objects in half.

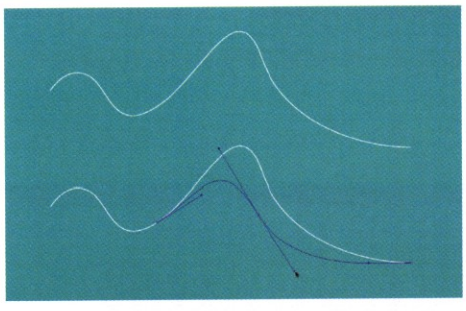


"Holding down Shift when plotting points with the Pen tool enables you to constrain the curve. Useful for flowing or straight-edged lines."



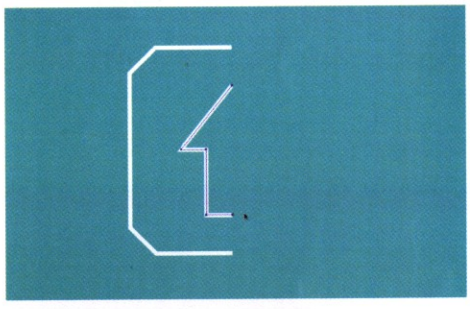
7 Quickly join open-ended paths

Looking at the example above. You can see that there are a pair of open-ended paths. If you have an open-ended path that you want to close to create one single path, then do the following: Use the Direct Selection tool to select the two end points and with both end points selected, hit Cmd/Ctrl+J to join the two ends to close the path.



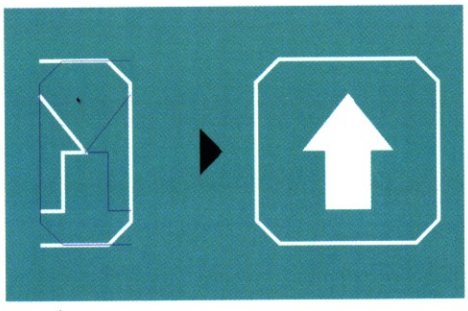
8 Adjusting handles

You'll notice that with every curve or line that you create, handles are also created. These can be used to adjust the angle and even the position of an anchor point retrospectively. Use the Direct Selection tool to select the anchor point and adjust the handles. Holding space bar enables you to move the position of the point.



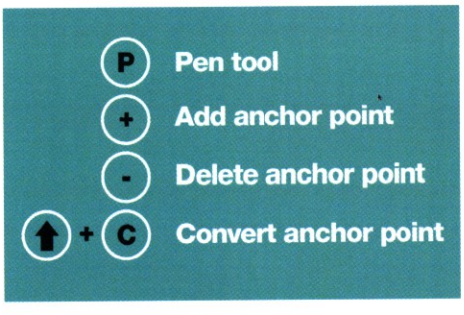
9 Drawing reflective shapes

One of the fundamental aspects with any workflow is to not waste time doing things the long way round. When drawing a shape that is going to be completely symmetrical, don't fall into the trap of drawing the whole circumference. These shapes can be created by drawing half of the object, then hitting (O) to bring up the Reflect tool.



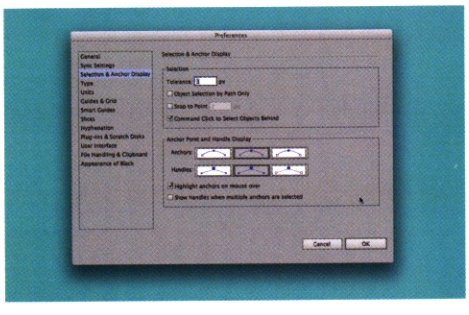
10 Duplicating reflected shapes

Once you have drawn half of your shape, select it and simply use the Reflect tool while holding Shift to accurately reflect the half of the shape that you've drawn. Once you are satisfied, hold Opt/Alt to duplicate the shape, effectively creating the same shape again but in reverse. Then, holding Shift again, take care to align the two halves accurately.



11 Essential shortcuts

In order to maximise your efficiency, it's essential that you know and use keyboard shortcuts. They are so much easier than laboriously navigating through menus and tool bars. It's important to learn the following: Pen tool (P), Add Anchor Point tool (+), Delete Anchor Point tool (-), Convert Anchor Point tool (Shift+C). So get them in your brain!



12 Preferences

Finally, it's always a good idea to adjust the preferences in Illustrator to best suit your workflow. This can be done easily using the Preferences dialog. You can adjust the look of anchors and handles, alter the selection tolerance and adjust the keyboard increments so that your work becomes more precise when nudging anchor points.

PATTERN KNOW-HOW

KEY SKILLS

- Using the Pen Tool to trace drawings.
- Archiving the workflow using the Artboards.
- Colour selection sources and Live Paint.
- Applying and controlling Opacity Masks to designs.
- Layering and composition to create designs.
- Adjustments using Recolour Artwork and Edit Colors.

AUTHOR: Matt Lyon

CORE SKILLS

DESIGN AN ABSTRACT PATTERN

Get to grips with designing and colouring an abstract pattern composition that bursts off the page with colour, style and visual panache...

DON'T FOLLOW A PATTERN

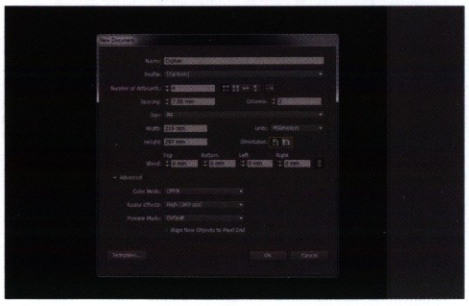
Matt Lyon, freelance illustrator, www.c86.com

Working in Adobe Illustrator commonly dictates a workflow that demands precision and pre-planning. Vector artwork by nature is clean and exact, though it can be interesting to approach the creation of work from alternative directions to arrive at more unexpected results. For this design, we will be working from a handful of drawn image elements that will form the constituent parts of a composition, which in turn will be created without any prior vision of its outcome.

This creative process allows for spontaneity and flexibility, as well as the freedom to arrive at a number of possible outcomes. This approach is more akin to more traditional methods of image-making, inspired by collage and in a broader sense drawing. It will feel most comfortable to designers familiar with the layered structure of working, such as that seen in the likes of Adobe Photoshop.

CREATE AN ILLUSTRATIVE PATTERN

Go from hand-drawn elements to a final pattern composition...

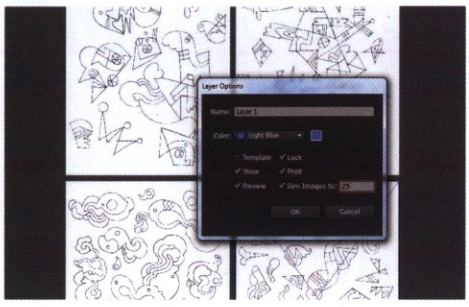


1 Getting started

The first stage is to create the new document. The process will initially be working from four sheets of drawings, so create four artboards to accommodate them. Be aware of other settings too, especially in the Advanced section where the Colour Mode of CMYK or RGB is selected.

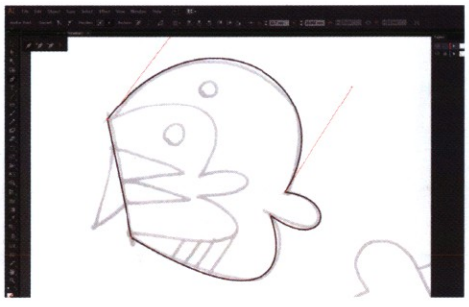
2 Loading up the drawings

Having previously scanned in drawings that are going to be worked from, open them up using File>Place. Open all four at the same time and place them on the Artboard. It's possible to chose which drawing goes on which artboard in Illustrator and they can then be aligned using the options in the Control bar.



3 Making layers

Next, working in the Layers panel, double-click on Layer 1 to bring up the Layer Options where you need to lock the layer and dim images to 25 per cent. Once that's done, create a new layer above Layer 1 ready for you to start working in. This preparation replicates traditional set-ups for tracing.

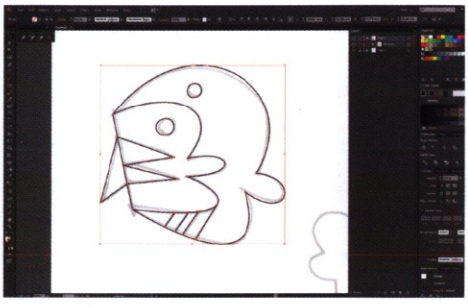


4 Hand-tracing the drawings

The next step is to hand-trace the drawings using the Pen Tool (P). In the Stroke panel use a stroke weight of 0.5-1.0pt and set the Limit to 100 (so that corners always remain sharp), and ensure that Smart Guides (Cmd/Ctrl+U) are active. Using a black stroke, redraw the shapes with as few anchor points as possible.

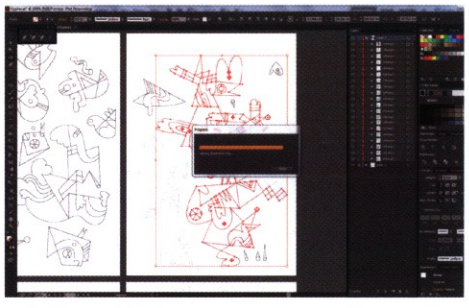
5 Tidy lines

It is good practice to keep line work as tidy as possible. For example, where corner points meet lines, the resulting miter join can look ugly. An easy solution is to this problem is to use the Scissors Tool (C) to click on the offending anchor point and remove the corner, preventing ugly overlaps and untidy lines.



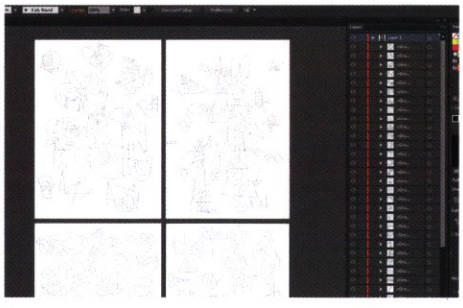
6 Combine your paths

Once each element has been traced, you need to combine the paths together. This can be done either by grouping them (Cmd/Ctrl+G) or by creating a Compound Path (Cmd/Ctrl+8). It is important to do this as it makes them easier to manage. Which method you use is down to personal preference.



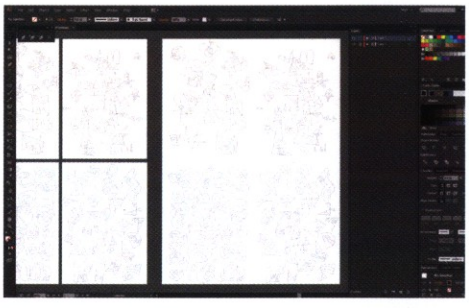
7 Collect paths

Continue to work your way through the four Artboards, tracing each element, collecting the constituent paths in groups and keeping your miter corners neat. Remember to keep saving as you go along so that no progress is lost.



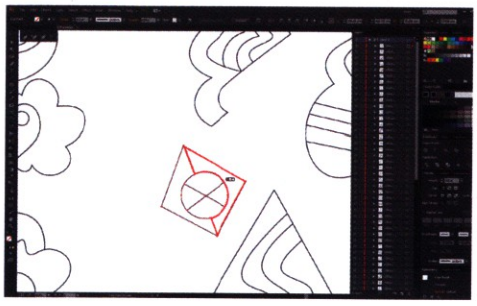
8 Delete unnecessary layers

As seen in the Layers panel, all the image elements are shown as a list of groups. Once all the tracing has been completed, the next thing to do is to delete Layer 1 that contains the drawing scans. It won't be needed again so it's a good idea to de-clutter.



9 Use multiple Artboards

As Illustrator supports multiple Artboards and a large workspace, it is a good idea to record progress in a single file. Before moving on to develop the line work, duplicate everything you have done so far. Next, place this in a new layer and move it to a fifth Artboard.

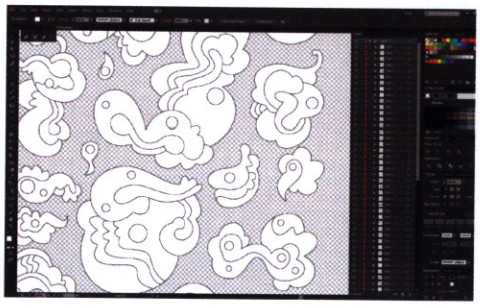


10 Prepare for colour

In preparation for colouring the line work in Layer 2, one-by-one select a group and then use the Bucket Tool (K) to convert it to a Live Paint group. Continue through the list of groups until all of them are converted and ready to have colour applied.

11 Apply a base colour

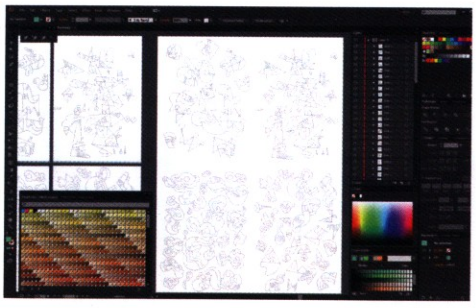
Before you start to colour in each element of your composition, the first thing to do is to fill in the groups with a base colour. Simply select them all and double-click on the fill switch in the Tools panel to open the Colour Picker.



12 Check for gaps

For this design we chose white as a base-fill colour. The next step once this is done, is to check to see if there are any gaps in the Live Paint groups. To make this process easier, the Artboard can be temporarily hidden (Cmd/Ctrl+D).

> "Try to make choices of colour based on intuition and speed. It can help to have reference images at hand that can act as inspiration. Colour can be very intimidating though!"

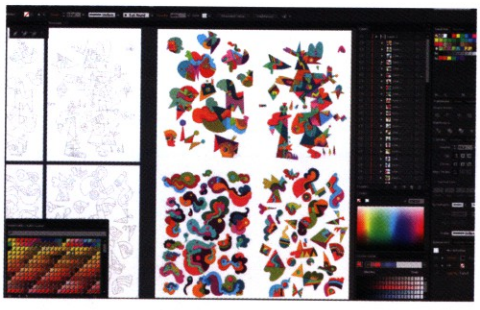


13 Colouring process

The colouring process is often one of the most enjoyable. Open a number of sources for colour selection, including Colour Books (e.g. Pantone) and the Colour panel. Ensure to make regular use of the Colour Guide panel for choosing various combinations of hue, tone and saturation.

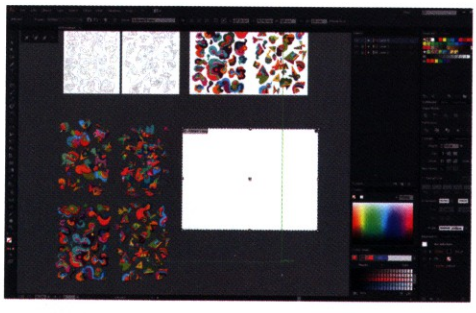
14 Working with colour

The next stage is try to make choices of colour based on intuition and speed. It can help to have images at hand that can act as inspiration. Colour can be very intimidating though. The alternative method is to use a deliberately limited palette, such as three or five colours, can be easier to manage.



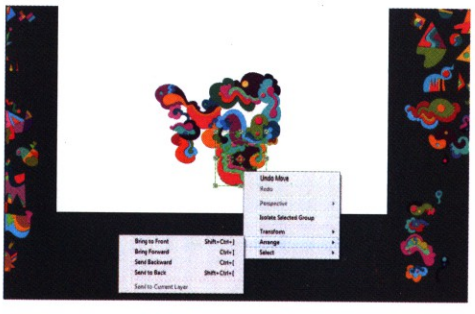
15 Colour continuity

Despite the broad palette of colours, the completed elements still show a continuity of colour in their balance of tone and hue. This is where tone really comes to the fore. It is possible to work with a wide range of colours and yet still have them blend well together.



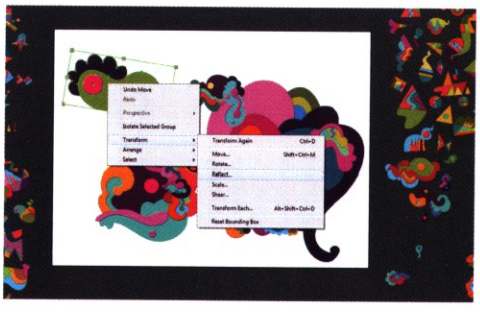
16 Archiving progress

Similar to step nine, at this stage the next step is to archive your progress by duplicating all the newly coloured elements into a new layer. These are placed alongside a new Artboard of the same size or proportion of the final design.



17 Creating the composition

The next step it to start creating the composition of the design. Using the image elements, the design is built and pieced together. Elements can be arranged either above or below each other, all the while being aware of their placement within the overall composition.



18 Transform elements with design in mind

The experimenting stage is next. Each placed element can be transformed in terms of scale, rotation, reflection and so on. Contrasts of shape and colour, as well as being aware of the space in-between, are all important when creating a balanced design.

CREATING AN ILLUSTRATIVE PATTERN CONTINUED...

19 Fill beyond the frame

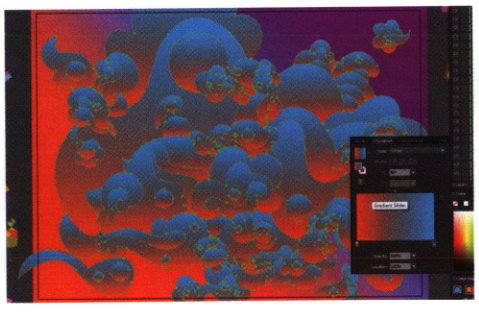
The next stage is to decide how many of the shapes from the initial composition will form the background to the design. Next, push the design beyond the frame of the Artboard so that the design doesn't 'hang' in the middle. The contrast of scale, and the shapes' stylistic similarity creates a distinctive sense of movement.

20 Obscuring the white Artboard

To further unite the elements and create a more cohesive composition, the next step is to add a rectangle filled with a gradient of three colours selected from the design. This is placed behind everything to obscure the white of the Artboard. In the Layers panel, it's worth locking this shape in position.

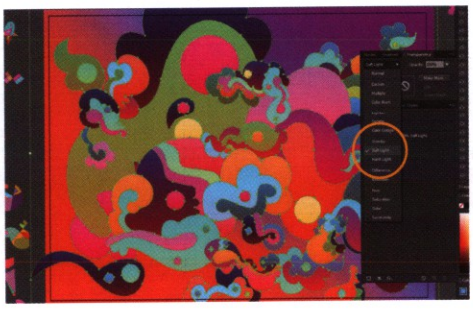
21 Convert paint groups to regular groups

With all of the design's Live Paint groups selected, they now need to be grouped together. Click Expand in the Control bar. This converts the Live Paint groups back to regular groups. Still selected, in the Pathfinder panel select Trim or Merge. This will remove the stroke lines and combine everything into a single group.



22 Copy, position, and fill with colour

The next part of the process is to make a copy of this newly created group, and with it positioned above, fill with a two-colour gradient. The Gradient panel can be used to select the colours and angle.



23 Subtle blend of colour

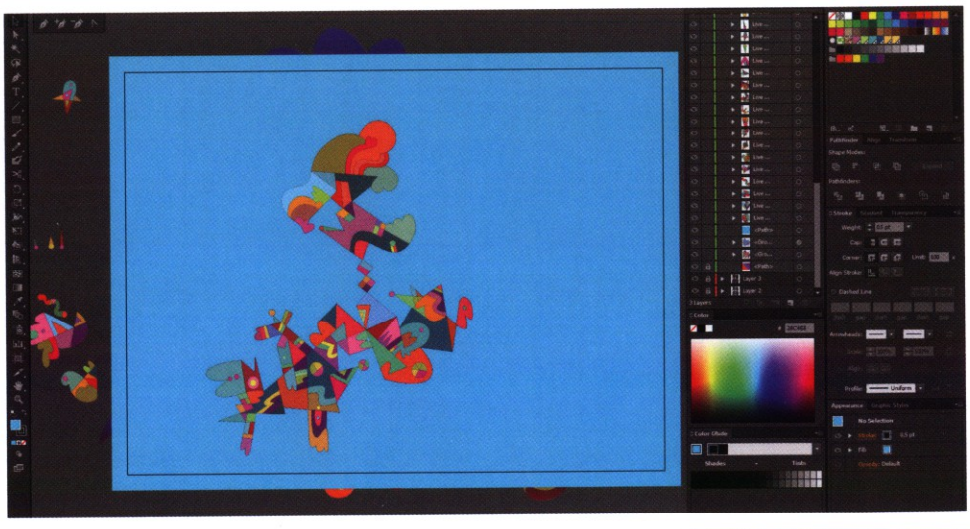
Working in the Transparency panel, set the blend mode of this gradient overlay to Soft Light. As such the gradient affects the appearance of everything underneath, creating a subtle blend of colours.

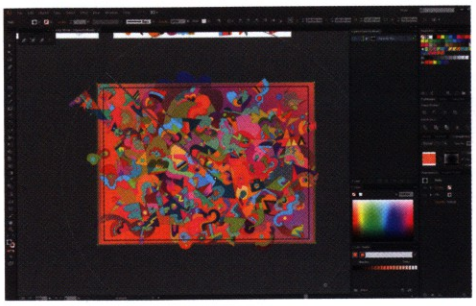
24 Editing colours

To quickly edit the two colours of the gradient, with the group still selected, choose Recolour Artwork from the Control bar. New colours can be previewed and reassigned by adjusting the sliders.

25 Creating foreground composition

Before creating the foreground design, drag a filled rectangle shape over everything to obscure the background from view. Next, in the Layers panel, both this rectangle and the groups containing both the design and gradient should be positioned at the bottom of the layer. Using the remaining image elements start creating the foreground composition. As before, balance and variety is key to a successful design. In contrast to the background design, avoid overlaying and resizing things to allow an almost equal balance of space in between. This will be essential to allow the background to show through.



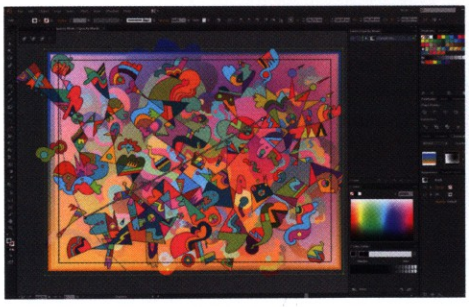


26 Add an Opacity Mask

Working on the blue rectangle shape that separates the foreground and background designs, change the fill colour to orange. In the Transparency panel, add an Opacity Mask that is filled with a black and white radial gradient. The opacity can be controlled using the Gradient tool.

27 Differentiate!

The design is now slowly but surely coming together. The next stage is to further differentiate between the foreground and background elements of the composition. This process is done by boosting the weight of the stoke of the foreground design. This helps to bring the foreground to life.



28 Add an extra filled rectangle

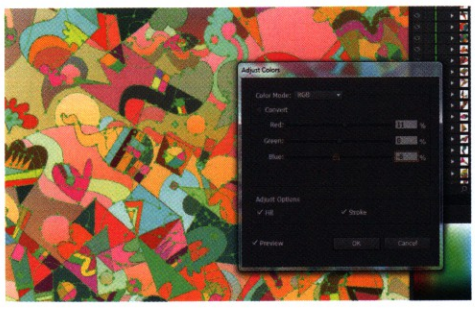
To continue balancing the foreground and background, the next stage is to add another filled rectangle shape between the two areas (this time filled with a blue/orange gradient). Similar to before, use an Opacity Mask filled with a black and white gradient to control the transparency of the shape.

29 Final composition tweaking

Final edits are made to the foreground composition by making slight adjustments of position, scale and rotation to anything that is in visual conflict with the design underneath in the background.

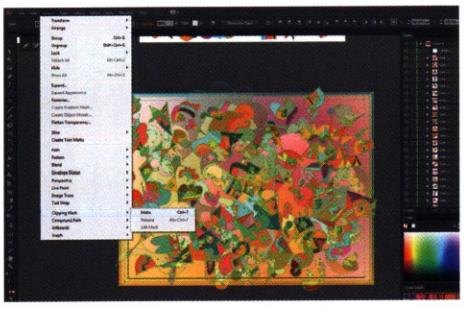
30 Recolour Artwork tool

One of the final stages is to select some or all elements of the design and, using the Recolour Artwork tool, explore global adjustments of colour as well as replacements of whole palettes or colour schemes. In multi-coloured designs a good tip can be to avoid the use of black. Instead try and match the stroke colour with the darkest fill colour.



31 Final colour adjustments

Final colour adjustments are made to the design using options in the Edit Colours submenu, such as colour balance, saturation and so on. It can often be quite surprising how small changes can dramatically alter and improve the work's appearance.



32 Almost done

To preview the final design, drag an empty rectangle (no stroke or fill) above everything. The shape should match the size of the Artboard and be aligned/centred with it. With everything selected, go to Object>Clipping Mask>Make (Cmd/Ctrl+7).

33 And that's it...

The final outcome. With the Clipping Mask still in place, the very last stage in this process is to adjust the scale, position and reflection of the design to best suit its placement in the frame. Once that has been completed the final composition is ready.

YEH!

CORE TOPICS FOR CHARACTERS

KEY SKILLS

- Using simple shapes to create complex artwork.
- Using Isolation Mode.
- Gradients and effects.

AUTHOR: Jon Ball

CREATIVE SKILLS

CHARACTER DESIGN

Using a raft of techniques Illustrator can be an excellent tool for creating characters. Here's how to give personality to your page...

GIVING YOUR ARTWORK CHARACTER

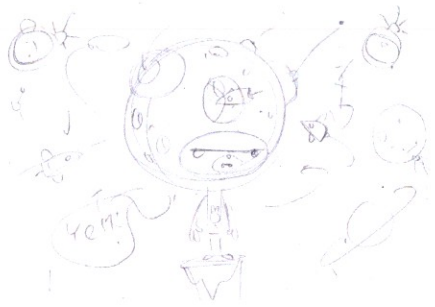
Jon Ball, Poked Studio, www.pokedstudio.com

When working in Illustrator it is possible to create brilliant, imaginative characters with comparative ease. One of the best ways to create characters is by using simple geometric shapes. We take these shapes to add details and imperfections to bring them to life on the page. In this tutorial I will take you through dividing up vectors using cuts and joins. In addition, we are also going to look at how you can use gradient shading to add the feeling of depth to your flat vector images.

We will also be exploring how you can organise and adjust images. Layers and objects should all be named and we'll be using the Isolation Mode to speed up your illustration workflow. So let's get started!

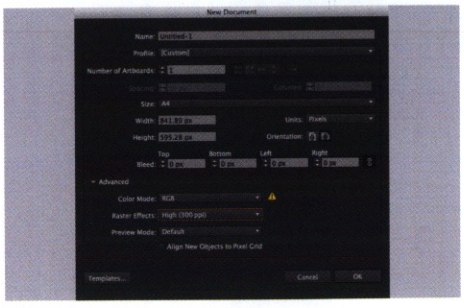
QUICK AND QUIRKY CHARACTERS

Illustrator is the perfect tool for designing character-led pieces...



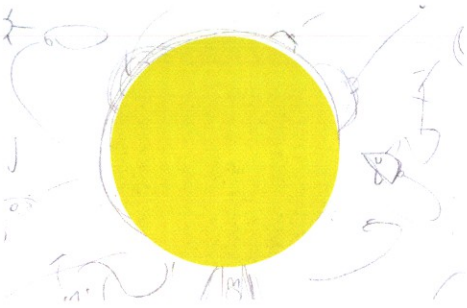
1 Concepts on paper first

First, draw a simple concept image with one main character at centre. Sketch out the scene on paper ready to be scanned in. Once you're happy with your sketch, scan it in and save it. Once the sketch is saved, open Illustrator and create a new A4 document at 300dpi.



2 Bring your sketch into Illustrator

Select File>Place and locate the scanned sketch, then stretch out the placement box so it fits the Artboard. Now create a new layer. Lock the layer your sketch is on and create a new layer. Change the opacity to 50 per cent (Window>Transparency). If your scan is dark, this will help you see the layer above more easily.

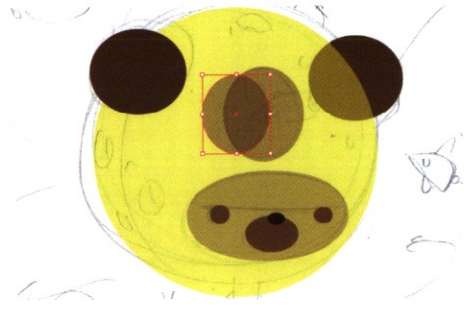


3 As a guide only

Don't trace exactly, just use the sketch as a guide. On your new layer create a large circle in the position of the head of the main character (use Ellipse tool – L on the keyboard). This should have a solid fill and no stroke. Reduce the opacity of the circle to help you see the sketch behind.

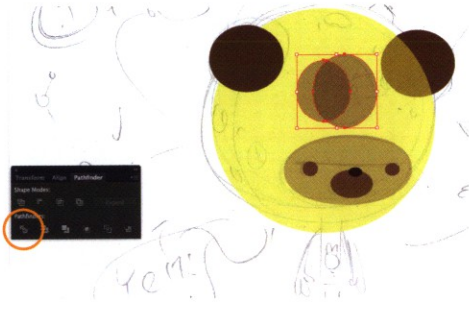
4 Build the character

Tweak the shape of the circle so it's not perfect. Add the main features of your character using basic circle shapes. There are two ears – one is further forward than the other. Send the rear one to the back of the current layer – Object>Arrange>Bring To Front or Object>Arrange>Send To Back.



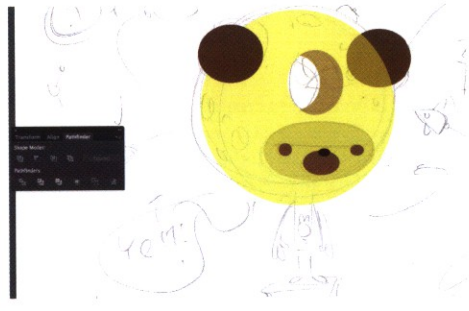
5 Shrinking circles

Now you are going to make the cut in the ellipse that is the hole in the character's head – using the Pathfinder. Start off by drawing a circle in the centre of the head. Select the circle, hold Opt/Alt and drag the circle slightly to the side to duplicate it. Next, shrink the second circle down a little.



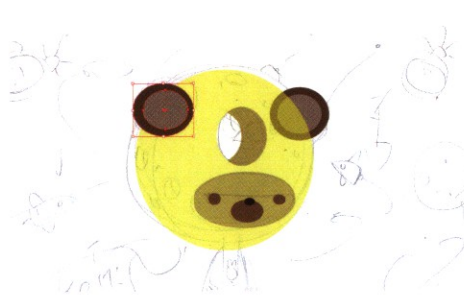
6 Pathfinder skills

Open the Pathfinder panel. Select both circles. Choose the Divide tool in the Pathfinder panel. The circle has now been cut along the overlapping parts. You can now use the Direct Selection tool (A) to select the overlapping part you don't need. Once selected, delete it.



7 Hole in the head

Select the head and the central ellipse and 'divide' them. Now select the segment that will be the hole with the Direct Select tool and delete it. You will need to repeat this as the Divide tool has created several layers. The head is now the top layer, so send it back using Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+[so it sits above the rear ear.



8 Adding features

Create two overlapping circles and again use the Divide tool. This time colour the central part. Duplicate the circles that make the ears by copying then pasting in front (Cmd/Ctrl+F). This creates a duplicate directly on the layer above. Then scale the duplicated element to make the centre of the ears.

9 Colour the head

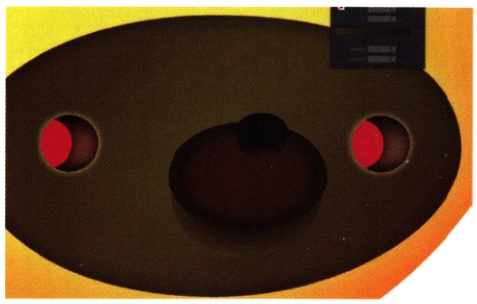
Bring the transparency of the head back up to 100 per cent. Select the head and then give it a radial gradient fill using the Gradient panel. Drag colour swatches onto the markers and experiment with the gradient. Make sure you check all default colours have been deleted from the gradient slider.

10 Carry on colouring

Colour the remaining parts using the same process that you used in the previous steps. You may want to tweak the exact shapes and placements as you are doing this. Don't be afraid to tweak your design and adjust your objects as you go. The great thing about this kind of work is that absolutely nothing is set in stone.

11 Adjusting gradient fills

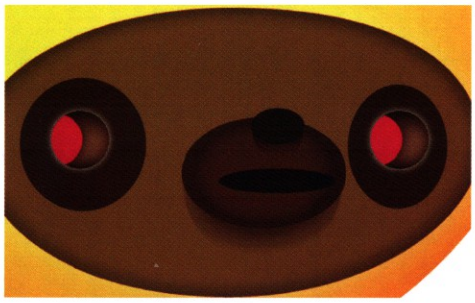
You can adjust the shape of the gradient fills by adjusting the angle and aspect ratio in the Gradient panel. This helps if your circle is more of an ellipse shape. You can also drag one of the colour sliders across, so the gradient fades quickly at the edges rather than being linear. Experiment.



12 Continue adding gradients

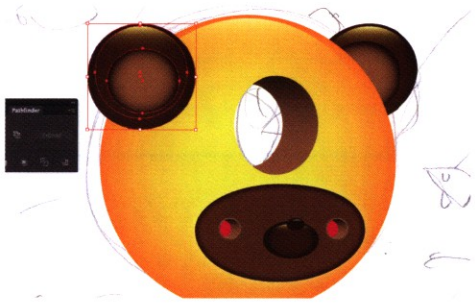
The next stage is to add a gradient to the inner part of the eyes and the hole in the head. Use a linear gradient for this, setting the angle at 90 degrees. You may want to use a darker colour at the top of the gradient and adjust the exact position of the sliders. Whatever suits your eye and the look you're going for.

> "Don't be afraid to tweak your design and adjust your objects as you go. The great thing about this kind of work is that absolutely nothing is ever set in stone and things change all the time."



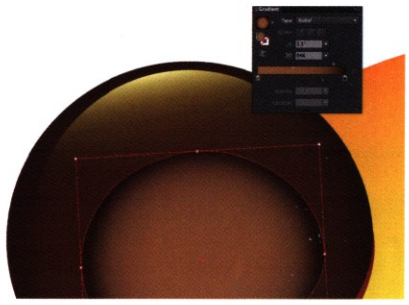
13 Adding effects

Add an outer glow to some of the elements (Effects>Stylize>Outer Glow). The darker part of the face colour should have a 5-pixel glow with a screen blending mode, but check Preview to help you get it right. You can adjust this glow at any time in the Appearance panel by double-clicking on the effect.



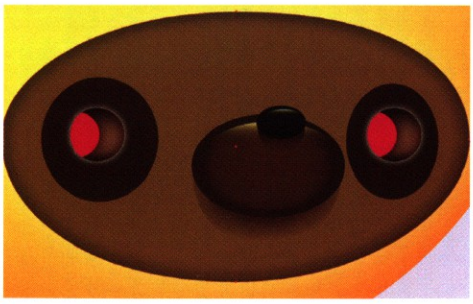
14 Adding highlights

Next, add some highlighted areas. Go into Isolation Mode (double-click the path using the Selection tool). Add a new, smaller circle with a linear gradient fill at a 90 degrees. Use an off-white at the top of the gradient. The bottom is yellow but with a transparency of 0 per cent. This helps blend with the colour of the head.



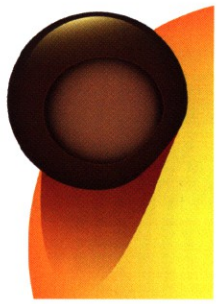
15 Adjusting colours

Again adjust the colours of your gradient by dragging new colours onto the slider to replace the default. Tweak the colour if necessary. Leave Isolation Mode and move your new gradient part to fit with your image. You can use the Direct Selection tool to move parts in a group, even when in standard mode.



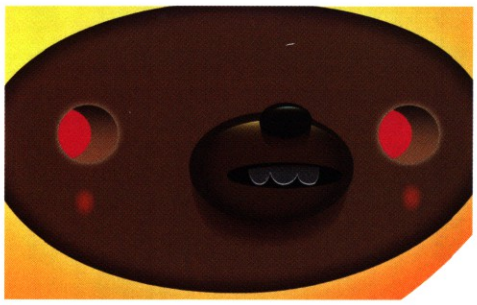
16 More highlights

Following the same process as before, add highlights to both the ears and nose. You may need to adjust the layering of the highlights so that they sit directly over the part they are highlighting. Group some of the elements together to make it easier later on using Cmd/Ctrl+G.



17 Time for some shadows

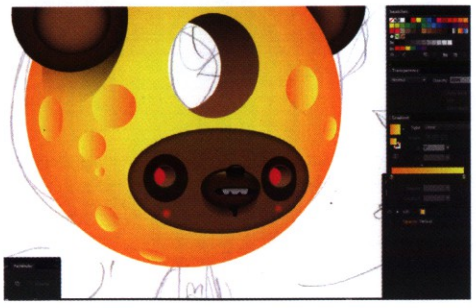
Create a circle over the left ear, distorting it downwards and giving it a gradient fill. In the Transparency panel, adjust the blending mode to Multiply. Send this backward (Cmd/Ctrl+[) so it sits under the ear. Create more shapes for the shadows under the mouth and nose areas. Tweak the gradient and transparency to fit.



18 Extra details

Add a few extra details to the face at this point – some shaded areas on the cheeks and a mouth and teeth. Draw an oval for the mouth and then draw the teeth in. Use the Feather effect on the cheeks (Effect>Styilize> Feather). Keep adjusting the shapes and colours as you go so that you are happy with the result.

QUICK AND QUIRKY CHARACTERS, CONTINUED...



19 Adding the craters

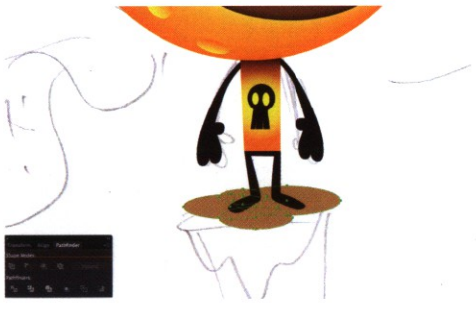
Now to build the craters. Create an ellipse and give it a gradient fill – the same colour combination as the head, but make this a linear gradient. Scale and position the craters so they look like they are wrapping around the head. Reverse the direction of the gradient on the opposite side of the head.

20 Building the body

For the main part of the body use a simple square and distort it slightly. This has the same radial gradient fill as the head. Roughly copy the arms and legs from the sketch. They shouldn't have too much detail – just basic shapes. Colour these to match the darker colours on the ears and face.

21 Adding shadows

Duplicate the main body (copy then Cmd/Ctrl+F). Next, add a dark linear gradient at the top and a transparent one at the bottom. This will add some shadow under the head. Lock this layer and create a new one for the background elements. Put it under the layer your creature is on in the Layers panel.

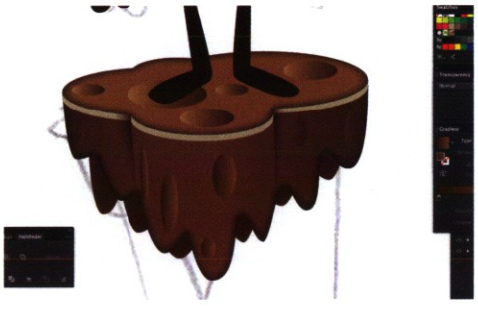


22 Form the main floating island

You can create the main floating island in this piece by making a number of ellipses and then using the Unite tool in the Pathfinder panel. Place all your ellipses together so they overlap slightly, and then select them. With the Pathfinder panel open hit Unite. They are now one object.

23 Adding further detail

To add some character and detail to the floating islands, draw in some rocky protrusions pointing downward – a sort of upturned mountain range. Add some gradients to the fills. Add a layer of protrusions behind and make them darker to give a sense of depth.

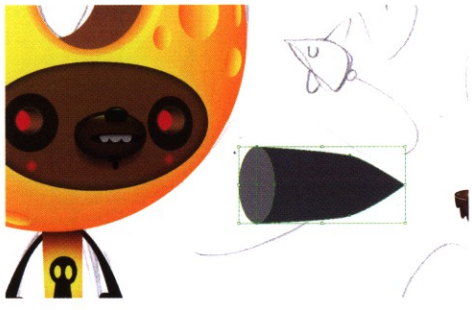


24 More landscape detail

Following on from the previous step, you can add more detail by using shapes with gradient fills to represent craters. Add in some gradients with a multiply blending mode and a transparent one at one end to create some shadows. Once you have done that add an inner glow, with a dark colour and a multiply blending mode.

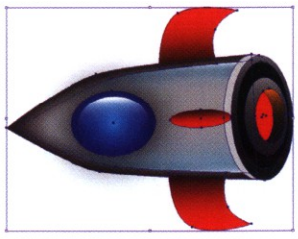
25 Duplicate the islands

Duplicate a few of these islands and scatter them around the background. Make sure to alter some details and colour on each. Firstly, group the original and then Opt/Alt drag to duplicate. To adjust, double-click and go into Isolation Mode, or use the Direct Select tool (A) to select individual parts.



26 Shaping the rocket

Start the rocket with an ellipse – this will form the base. Next, draw a rough cone shape – have Smart Guides turned on (View>Smart Guides). These help keep the shape of the rocket aligned to the ellipse. It also helps to have the points on your vector shapes line up where different objects meet each other.



27 Build the rest of the rocket

Put the rocket body behind the ellipse. Next, add the window and wings. Use a radial gradient for the window, then add a highlight with a linear gradient and one colour set to transparent. To make the rear jet, use the Pathfinder to dissect the two overlapping circles that are offset, then delete the leftover part.

28 Multiple rockets

Duplicate and adjust a few copies, placing them around the image where you see fit. Copy one and add it to a new layer above your character – this rocket will be flying through the hole in the head. You can add a few more details to the rocket now as it is a very important element in the image.

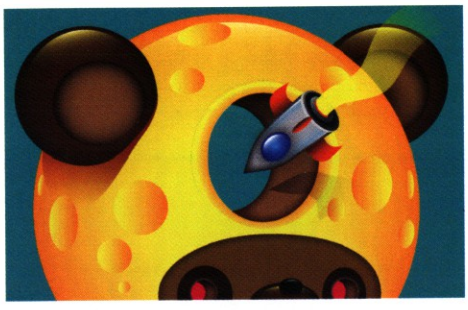
29 Using Envelope Distort

Using gradient fills, add some jet-trails to the rocket. Distort these slightly using the Envelope Distort tool: Select your shape and go to Object>Envelope Distort>Make with Mesh. Then use the Direct Selection tool to warp your shape. When you are happy, go to Object>Envelope Distort>Expand.

30 Bring the environment to life

Next add a few planets, stars and comets to the scene. Use the same shading style across the objects – in this case simple gradients. Group and then duplicate the main character and make a new version with different colours. Use the Direct Selection tool to select parts and change their colour.

> "The rocket will be flying through the hole in the head of the character. You should add a few more details to this rocket as it is a very important element in the image."

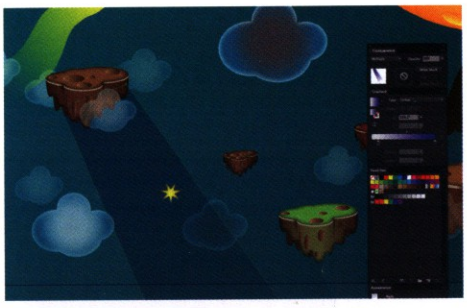


31 Floating in the clouds

Now add shadow on your character where the rocket is flying through. Make clouds by joining together a few ellipses using the Unite tool in the Pathfinder. Add a gradient fill and make the outer edge darker and reduce the opacity. Then add an inner glow with a Screen blending mode and a light colour.

32 More islands!

Next, create multiple islands by copying some of the islands in to a new layer in front of the main character. Experiment with colours, gradient fills and shapes to make some variations and overlaps. Add a background colour fill (using a simple rectangle) and send it to the back layer.



33 Shadowy objects

Draw a basic shadow, and give it a linear gradient fill that is transparent at the far end. Reduce the opacity of the shadow to 30 per cent. Send this layer behind the object that is causing the shadow. Duplicate this shape and add it to all your objects. Add a Feather effect at the edges at around 11 per cent.

34 Halo time

Add a gradient to your background colour so it gets darker in the direction of your shadows. Then, create another layer in front of the background, changing its fill to a radial gradient. Reduce the opacity and change the blending mode to Hard Light. This gives a slight halo effect around the character.

35 Forgotten anything?

Look back at your original sketch and add any detail you've forgotten. The character has a mark on the sketch where his brow is, which made him look meaner. Select the layer with the character on and draw the brow on, using a gradient fill. Then send it backwards until it sits behind the eyes and nose.

36 Decorative text and final touches

Create an ellipse for a speech bubble. Draw the text and decorative elements. Group the text, duplicate it and move it to the side. Send this behind the original text and give it colour. Do the same for the smaller text, but cut the text from the bubble using the Divide tool. Now just tweak until you're finished!

BUSINESS CARD DESIGN IN ILLUSTRATOR

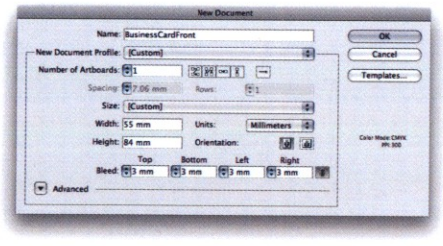
A well-designed calling card can make all the difference in winning new business. Tom Lane explains how to make one that reflects the social networking landscape...

A well-designed and interesting business card can be just what you need to gain a contact or impress a client. The problem is, the way in which we communicate has changed enormously over the last five years or so. Social media has brought us closer to increasing numbers of individuals from all over the globe. So these days the business card has a lot more work to do.

Here, we explain how to order all your information – including social media details – on your business card in an effective way, and guide you through setting up the document and preparing your files for print. The specs we're working to are compatible with those used by online business card printing companies such as moo.com.

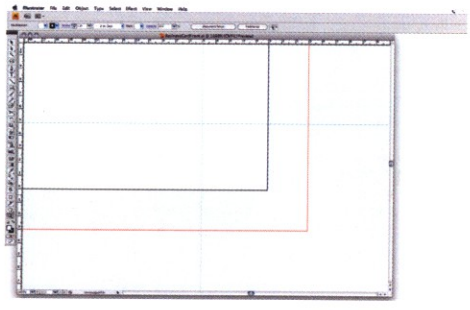
EXPERT TIP: CHECKING COLOUR

To gain even greater control over your colour when printing you can use a Pantone reference book as a guide. Although they're a little pricey, they're certainly well worth the investment. Referring to the swatches enables you to check what your colours will look like when they're printed on coated or uncoated card. With the right book, you'll also be able to see how your colours will appear when they've been printed in CMYK. To access the Pantone swatches in Illustrator, simply go to Window>Swatch Libraries> Colour Books.



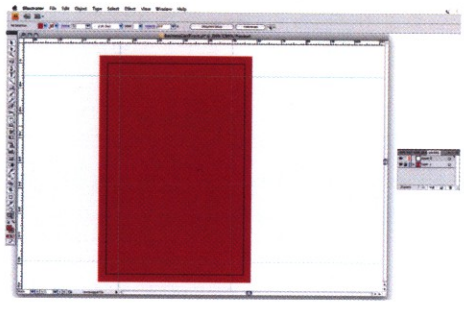
1 New document

Open up Illustrator and create a new document. Name it Businesscardfront (or similar) and set its dimensions as 55mm wide by 84mm high. Choose a 3mm bleed and hit OK. Now hit Cmd/Ctrl+R to bring up the ruler and zoom into the top-left corner.



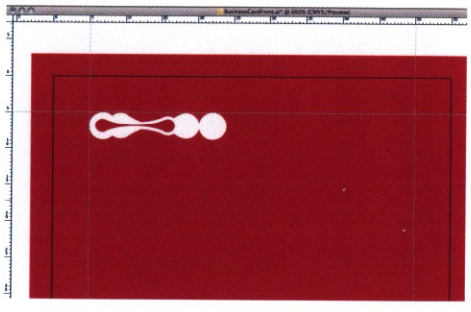
2 Adding guides

Drag your first guide from the vertical ruler to mark 5mm in from the left. Drag your second guide from the horizontal ruler to mark 5mm from the top. Now go the bottom right-hand corner and drag your final two guides 5mm in from the right and bottom.



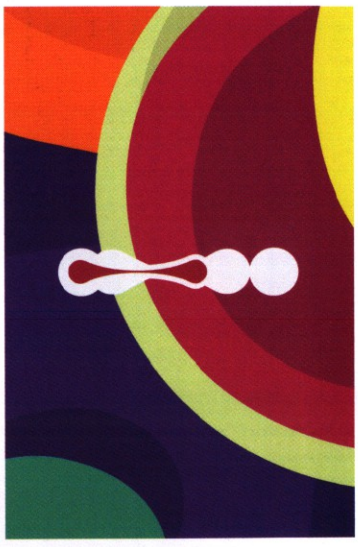
3 Choose your fill

Select the Rectangle Tool and drag a rectangle to fill the Artboard and cover the bleed. Double-click the Fill option in the Tools panel and add these values to the CMYK: 23, 100, 57, 10. Now open up the Layers panel. Lock your layer and create a new one above.



4 Add your logo

Add your logo by either drawing it directly or copy and pasting it onto your BusinessCardFront Artboard. Position it so that it butts up against your guides. Choose the Type Tool from the Tools panel and click on the Artboard.



"The way in which we communicate has changed enormously over the last five years or so. These days the business card has a lot more work to do."

5 Choose your type

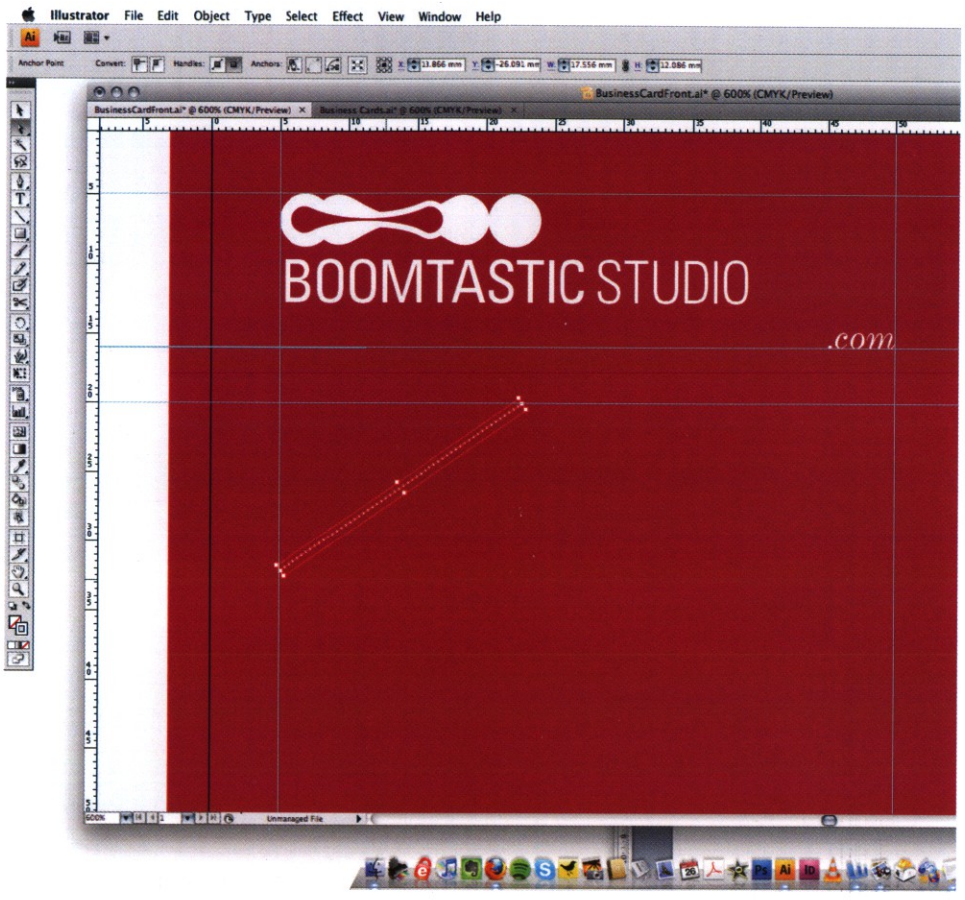
Type your name or company name at around 12-15pt, depending on your typeface option. Here, we've chosen Univers Condensed for the first half and Light Condensed for the second. Zoom in and position the type so it's just a few millimetres from the icon. Make sure everything is lined up...

6 Keep track

Display the name with equal spacing between the characters. As you can see from the image, the spacing between the B and the O differs considerably from the spacing between the S and the T. Refer to the Expert tip (page 47) to help you with tracking and kerning your type (if you need it).

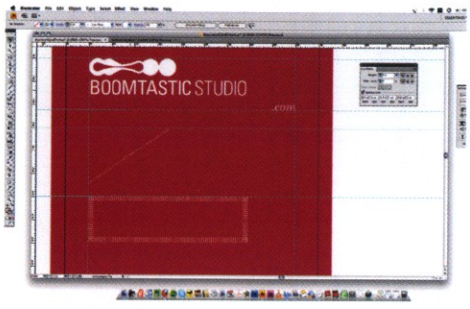
7 Add your URL

Select a font that's different from your logo font (we've chosen Century Italic). This will help separate information more and make things easier to read. Now drag a guide to 16mm down and type .com, .co.uk or the relevant component of your web address.


Illustrator File Edit Object Type Select Effect View Window Help
BusinessCardFront.ai* @ 600% (CMYK/Preview)
BOOMTASTIC STUDIO
.com

8 Get in line

Drag a guide to mark 20mm down. Select the Pen Tool and draw a diagonal line about 17mm long. Choose white as the Stroke fill. Open the Stroke panel (Window>Stroke) and set to 0.5pt and Dashed Line. Choose Rounded Cap and set the values to Dash -0.1pt, Gap -1pt.



9 Adding your text

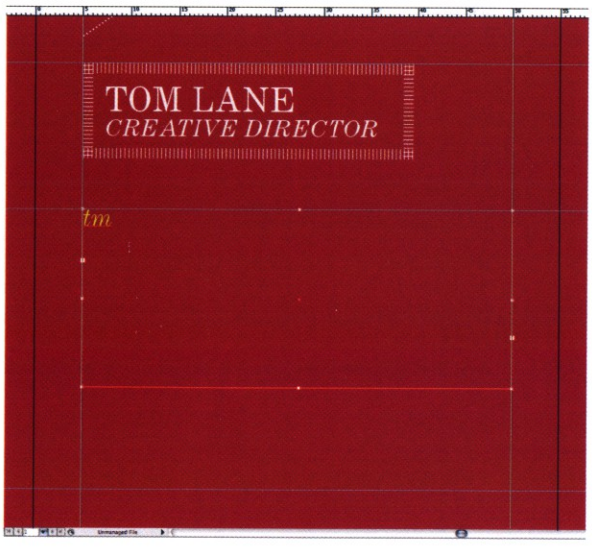
Drag a guide to mark 35mm down. Select the Rectangle Tool and draw a rectangle 35mm by 10mm (with the Rectangle Tool selected click on the Artboard and enter the values in the dialog that appears). Choose a White Stroke and set the Thickness to 3pt. Select Align Stroke Inside. Choose Butt Cap and set the values to Dash 0.2pt, Gap 1pt.

10 Your name is important!

Now select your chosen typeface and draw a text box within the rectangle by clicking and dragging with the Type Tool selected. Type your name and job title – and anything else you wish (but best keep it simple here). Set your name as a larger point size than your title and choose Italic to help differentiate the two even more.

11 Colour

Next, drag another guide and mark 50mm down. Select the Type Tool and drag a new text box to fill the space inside your guides. Choose your typeface again and in lower case, type the t and m. Now highlight these characters and colour them using these values: CMYK 5, 3, 98, 0.



12 Number style

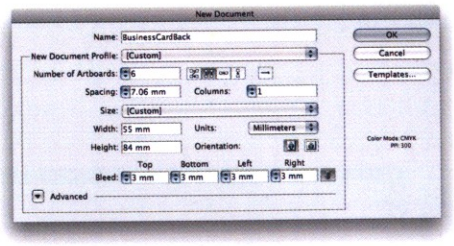
Choose a new typeface for the numbers (we've chosen DIN as it's clear and bold), and make these white. The only space you should use at this stage is between the first four digits of the numbers. Once done, hold down Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+T. This will bring up the Tabs panel.

13 Insert tabs

Use the Tab key to place a tab between the letters T and O (in this example). Choose the Left Justified Tab button and click on the ruler. Make the X value 4mm. Now tab between the 6 and the m, click the ruler on the Tab panel and make the X value 27mm. Finally, add one more tab at 31mm.

14 Add addresses

Use the same method as the previous steps to create your email and postal address. We've mixed the typography to add consistency and character to the design. When you're finished, draw a new horizontal line styled the same as your diagonal line.

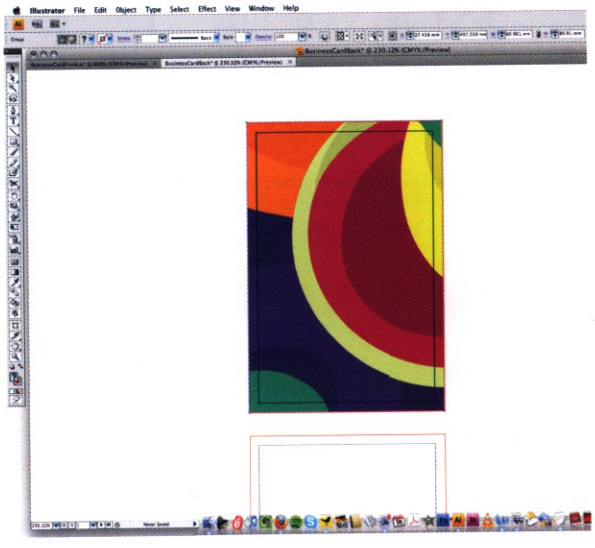


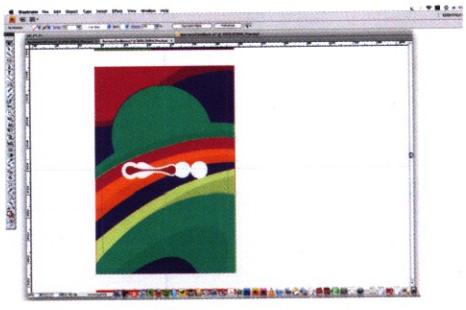
15 More details

Use the space below the line to add any of your new methods of contact and use tabs to space them. Next, create a new document, 55mm wide by 84mm high. Call it BusinessCardBack. Choose six Artboards and select Grid By Column, then choose one column.

16 Add artwork

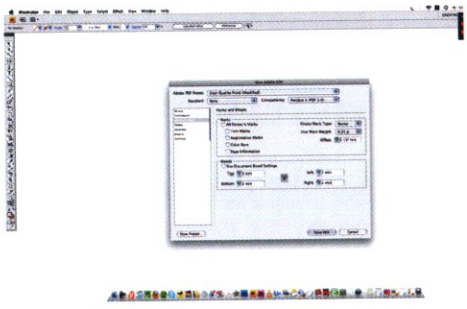
Here's where you can add artwork to the back of your card design. Design something that works with different crops. Copy and paste it onto your Artboard. Place the illustration over the bleed area. Draw a rectangle the size of the first Artboard, making sure you include the bleed. Then, with the rectangle and artwork selected, choose Object>Clipping Mask >Make.





17 Paste your logo

Repeat this process (from step 16) until you've finally filled all six Artboards with different crops of your artwork. One you've done this, open your logo file again and then copy and paste onto each Artboard in the centre. As always, you can use guides to help you do this accurately.



18 Make the PDF

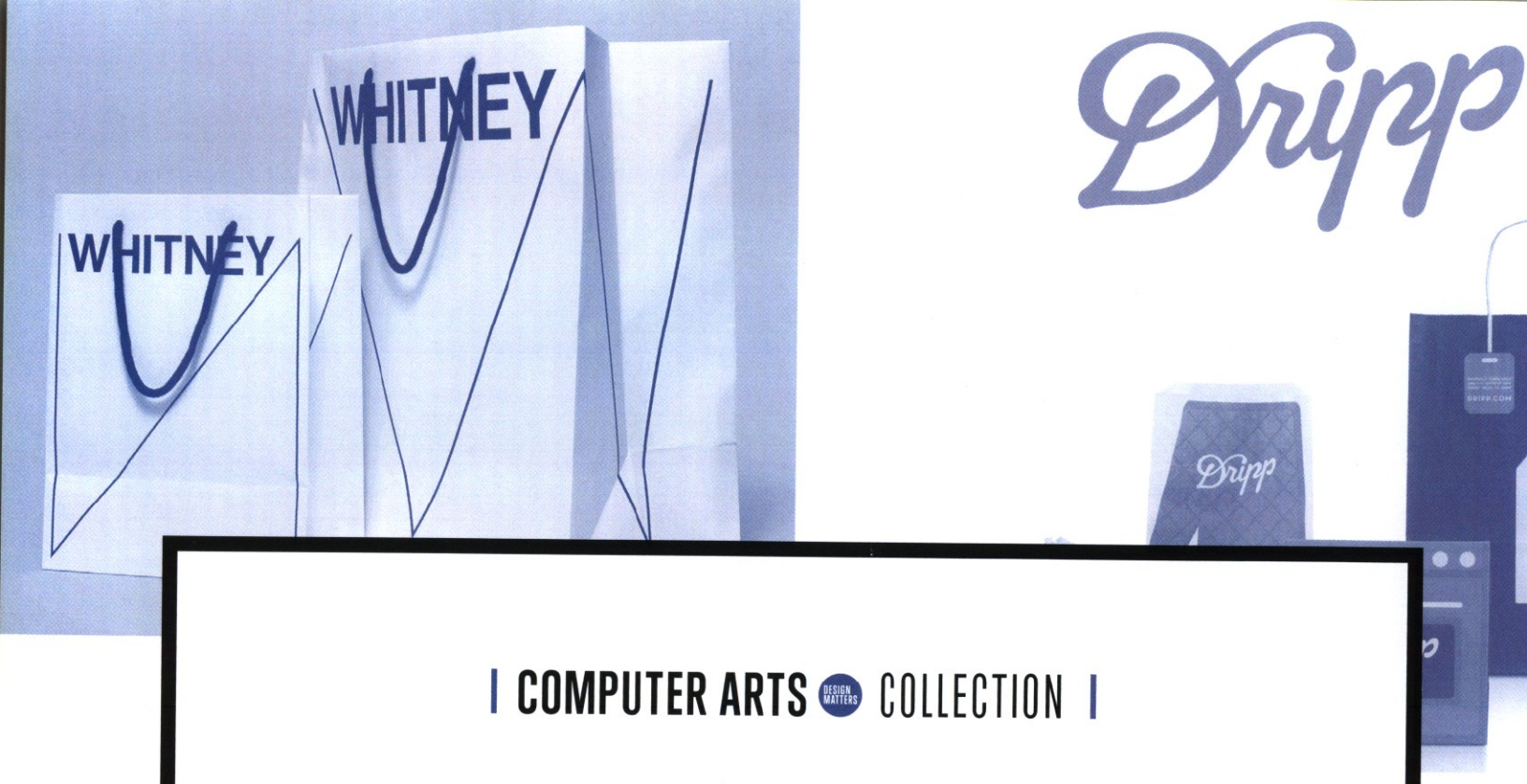
Choose File>Save As>PDF. In the dialog, select Range. Saving each Artboard individually, in the second 'Save Adobe PDF' dialog, choose High Quality Print. Set Marks and Bleeds to 3mm in all fields. Save the PDF file and repeat for all of your Artboards.

19 Finishing touches

Follow the same process for your BusinessCardfront file, checking that everything is still aligned and that all the information is correct. Your files should now be ready to upload to moo.com or another online printing service.

EXPERT TIP: CHECK YOUR SPACING

In typography, when characters are equally spaced regardless of their pairings it's called tracking, and this can be adjusted by increasing the values in the Character palette (second row, far right). Character pairs, such as A-V and W-A, should be manually spaced: Illustrator will almost certainly space these characters incorrectly and you'll notice rivers of white space in your words. This manual adjustment process is, of course, called kerning. Well-kerned characters can make a big difference to legibility and the overall quality of your card's typography. So spend time on it!



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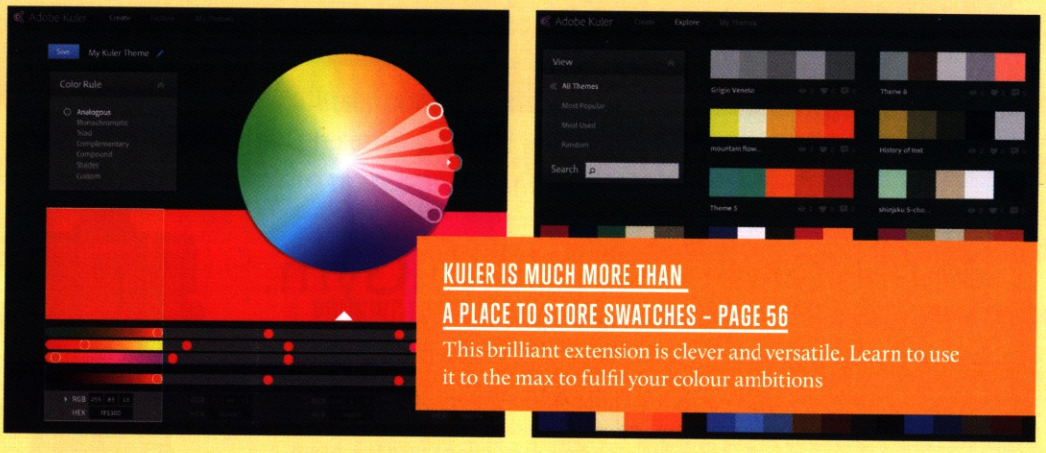
Discover the tools and techniques you need to create brilliant branding and identity work in Illustrator

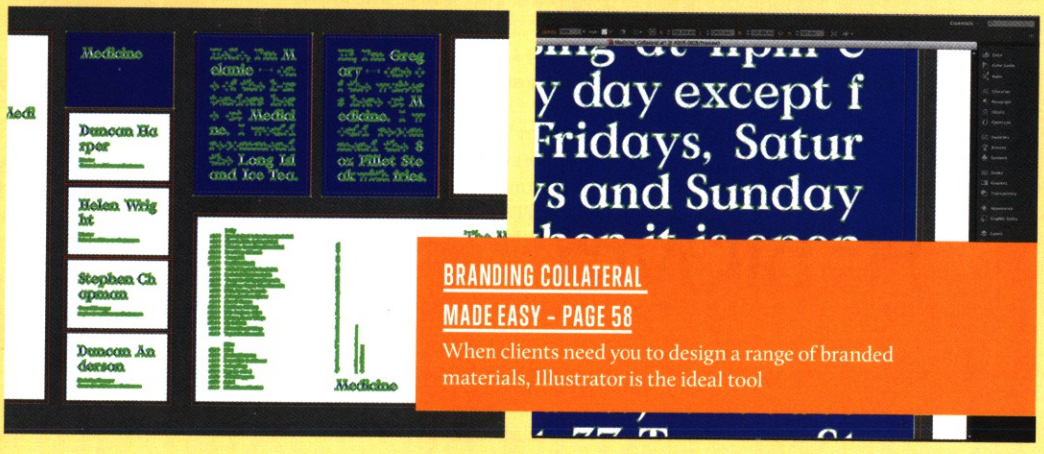


MAKE SURE YOUR LOGO MUSCLES UP TO THE COMPETITION - PAGE 50

Illustrator is a powerful tool for making logos and presenting them to clients...

KULER IS MUCH MORE THAN A PLACE TO STORE SWATCHES - PAGE 56

This brilliant extension is clever and versatile. Learn to use it to the max to fulfil your colour ambitions

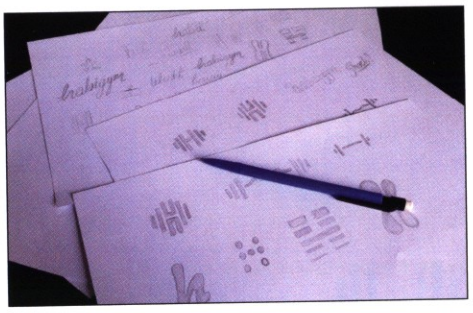


BRANDING COLLATERAL MADE EASY - PAGE 58

When clients need you to design a range of branded materials, Illustrator is the ideal tool

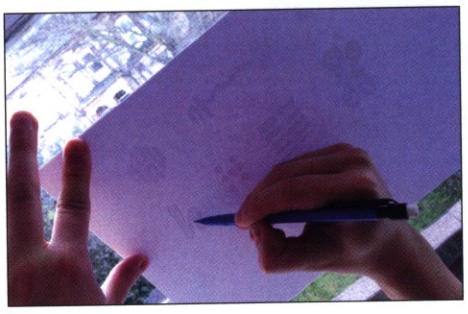
CRAFTING A QUALITY LOGO

In the beginning there was paper and pencil. On the second day came Illustrator...



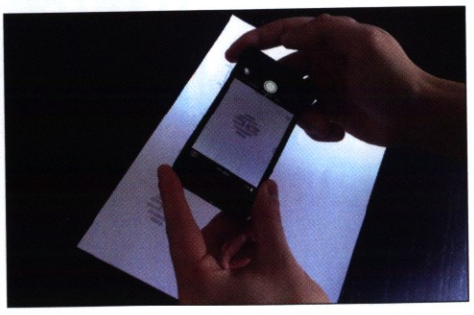
1 Always start on paper

Everyone knows they should start with a pencil, but with deadlines looming it's all too easy to forget this stage – don't. A major part of identity design is solving a problem with a concept – this happens much more fluidly on paper, as your mind bounces off each thing you put down on the paper.



2 Trace to refine

Don't scrap any ideas that you're not happy with – if you keep all your sketches you can use parts to create new concepts. If you don't have a lightbox you can use a window to help trace the sketch behind. Remember these are rough concept sketches, not works of art, with the purpose to encourage ideas generation.

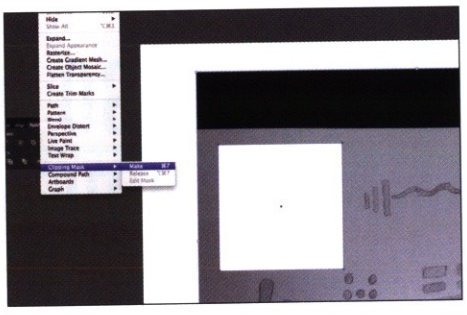


3 Mobile scanner

If you have a scanner, always use that for the best results. However, if you're out and about or don't have a scanner to hand, the next best thing is to take a photo of your sketches on your phone or camera. You can then email them to yourself to use as your guides for recreating digitally.

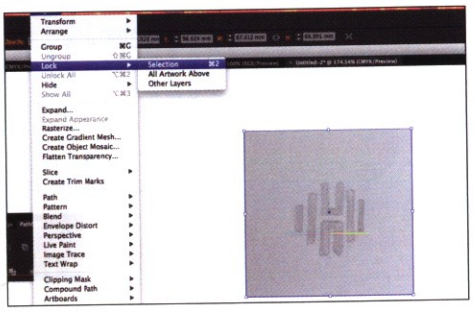
4 Don't use live trace

The Live Trace function is a very useful and powerful tool. However, when it comes to logos, absolute precision is fundamentally essential. This means that however tempting, Live Trace needs to be ditched and the work needs to be done manually – it's what you get paid for after all.



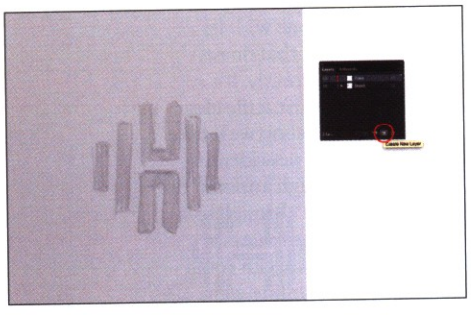
5 Crop your sketch

When tracing your sketches, it's easier to focus on just one element. You can crop out anything unwanted by creating a layer mask. To do this, simply draw a box over the image you're tracing using the Rectangle tool, select both elements and go to Object>Clipping Mask >Make.



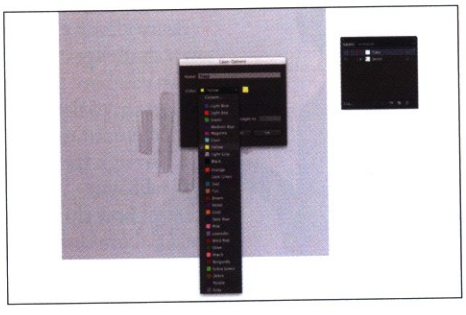
6 Lock it up

Now that the concept image is in position on the, work can begin on creating the vector shapes that build up the logo. Firstly, make sure you lock this image to the layer so you don't accidentally move it as you're working. You can quickly do this using the shortcut Cmd/Ctrl+2.



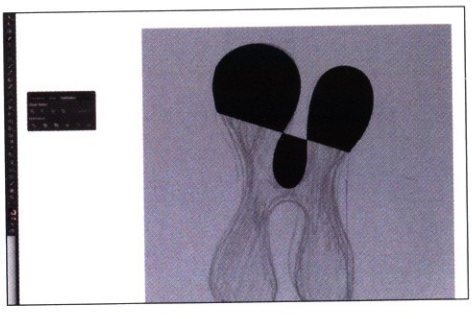
7 Layering in Illustrator

Regardless of what you are creating, it's best practice to work in layers. This way you can quickly find elements as well as turn layers on and off to see the benefits of a particular element. It's also a benefit, particularly when working in teams, to name layers so colleagues can navigate your files efficiently.



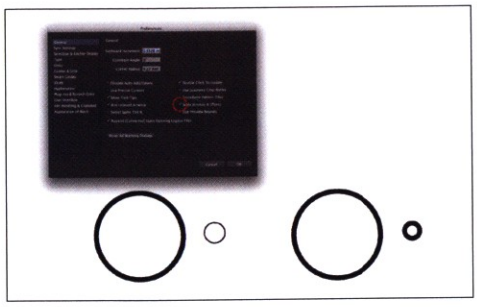
8 Change the colours of your layers

When you create an object in Illustrator the outline is the colour of the layer in the Layers panel. You can change the colour of layers by double-clicking on the layer in the Layers panel. This is useful if your logo and layer outlines are the same colour – and avoids confusion when trying to select objects.



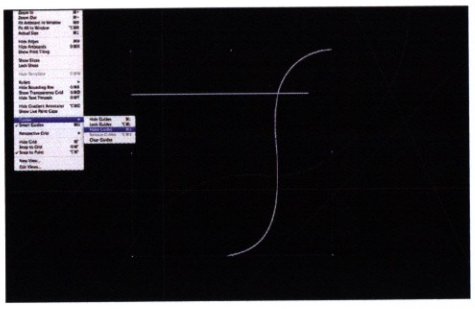
9 Practice makes perfect

The Pen tool is probably the most frequently used tool but one of the trickiest to master. It's a very powerful tool and learning it here will not only benefit your ability to create images in Illustrator, but the skills you acquire will also benefit any Photoshop pen work you do. See page 30 for more.



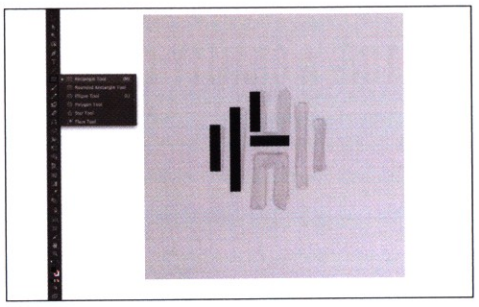
10 Scale strokes

Pen strokes can be set to scale proportionally. This means the stroke scales up or down with the pen size. To switch this feature on, go to Preferences and make sure Scale Strokes & Effects is ticked so your strokes resize automatically. This little tip will save you vast amounts of time on correcting.



11 Custom guides

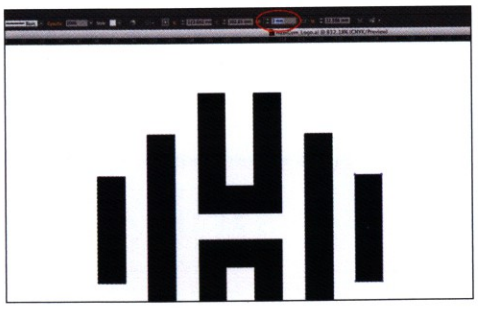
To make sure each element of your logo lines up, you can create guides by dragging them from the edge of the artboard. You can also make any path into a guide. Draw out your desired shape, select it and then hit Cmd/Ctrl+5. You can toggle your guides on and off with Cmd/Ctrl+;.



12 Utilise the Shapes panel

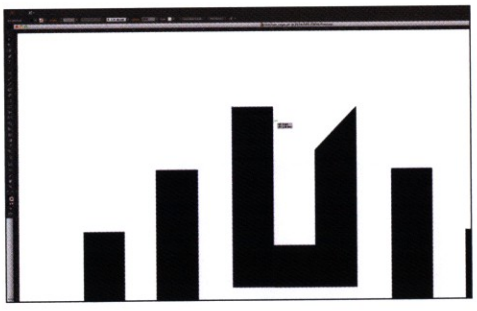
With this logo, you can create the marque by combining rectangles using the Rectangle tool to build the structure. When building up the vectors in your logo, look to see if the Shape panel can be used as it's quick and accurate. Hold Shift to draw shapes with equal proportions, such as perfect circles or squares.

> "To compare different variants, start with a master copy and duplicate it to edit. This means you can compare different designs to help make your decision as to which one you are most happy with."



13 Accurately adjust sizing

To make sure elements are exactly the same size, or just to check the size of an object, select it and the width and height is shown in the Control bar. You can type in sizes here too. This enables you to make all the rectangles the same width. This tool is useful when the design is symmetrical like our example here is.

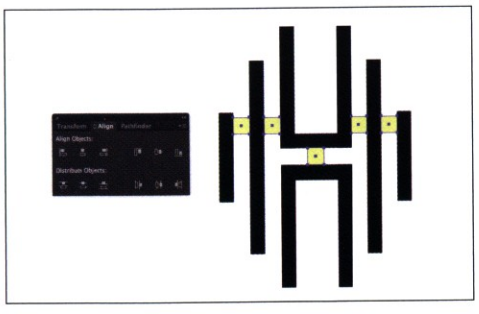


14 Directly select anchor points

Now you have a rough structure together for the logo, it's time to explore different structure variants to add more balance and character to the overall design. Rather than starting from the beginning each time you can drag the anchor points using the Direct Selection tool to alter the shape.

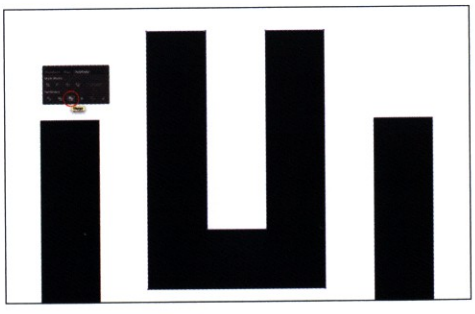
15 Duplicate elements quickly

To compare different variants, start with a master copy and duplicate it to edit. This means you can compare different designs to help make your decision. You can do this quickly by selecting the objects and then holding the Alt key while dragging. When you release your mouse the elements are duplicated.



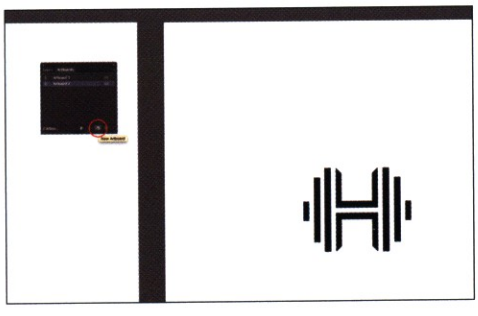
16 Alignment and Smart Guides

As well as using the brilliant Align tool (Window>Align), you can also create shapes to align objects and then use Smart Guides (View>Smart Guides). Now that you have Smart Guides turned on you can snap objects to the yellow squares to ensure an equal and controlled distribution of elements.



17 The Pathfinder

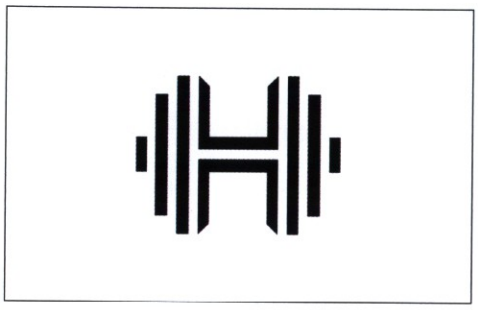
This tool is the quickest and most efficient way of combining shapes to create complex new ones. Here you can combine your rectangles to make one shape for the 'H' element in your logo. To do this, select both elements and hit Merge. This tool is definitely worth getting to know, as it will save you hours down the line.



18 Multiple artboards

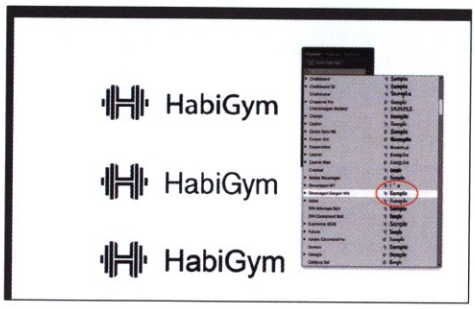
You can have multiple artboards in one Illustrator file by going to Window>Artboards then pressing the + symbol. This enables to you develop multiple logo variants on the same document, while at the same time keeping them separate so they don't conflict with each other. See page 58 for more.

CRAFTING A QUALITY LOGO, CONTINUED...



19 No colour...yet

Once you're happy with the logo structure, it's all too easy to start thinking of colour. It's best to leave this until after the whole logo is designed. Designing in black and white means your eye is less likely to be led by anything other than the raw structure of the logo.

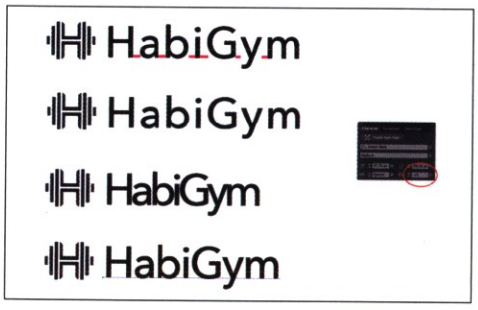


20 Preview your font choices

Using the Character dialog box, you can preview your font styles before selecting it. This cuts out choosing a completely inappropriate face if you can't remember how it looks. You can increase or decrease the preview size in Preferences>Type.

21 Suitability and balance

Always keep in mind when choosing fonts – the suitability to both the brief and the target audience. The shape, weight and style of the letters can alter the appearance and more importantly, the perception of the brand. Choosing wisely is essential.

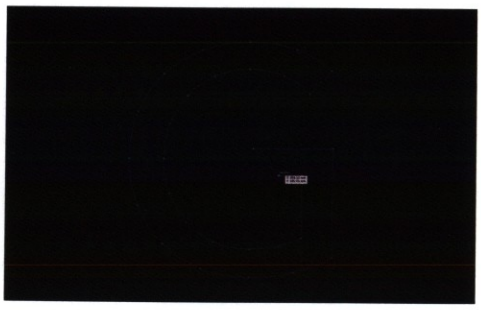


22 Time to tweak the type

At this stage it's key to bring in some core typography skills to your logo design. Altering the tracking and kerning of words can change the overall tone and feel of a logo. Try a variety of different settings depending on what suits your brief. You can show the Character panel by going to Window>Type>Character.

23 Adding character

Once you're happy with the type choice and the spacing, you can add character into the logotype by opening up the shapes into the native paths that make up the letters, altering the paths of each letter directly to make your type unique. To quickly convert the font to outlines (paths) hit Cmd/Ctrl+Shift + O.

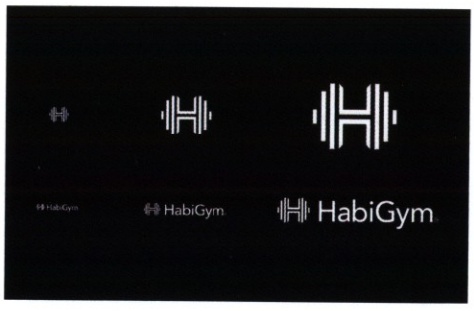


24 Keep changes subtle

Now your type is editable, you can use the Direct Selection tool to rearrange the anchor points and alter the appearance of the letters. Keep any changes small and subtle, as you don't want to step too far away from the core structure in case it looks out of place with the other letters.

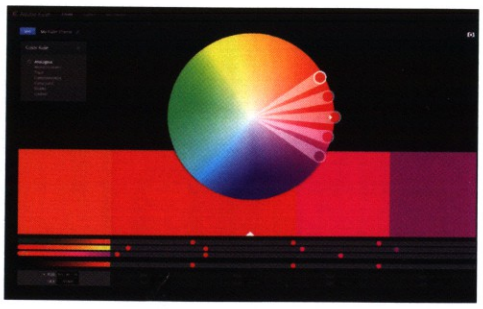
25 Experiment with various lock-ups

A lock-up is the type and marque elements of the logo working together. Careful scaling of the logo marque with the type is crucial to achieve a good cohesion between the two. Try a variety of different lock-ups to show the client. Flexibility again is key here – the logo must adapt to different spaces and surroundings.



26 Does the logo scale correctly?

It's time to check one of the main characteristics of a successful logo design – scalability. We need to make sure it works just as well small as it does large. Hold Shift to keep everything in proportion as you scale elements up and down. Ideally at this stage, it is best to check how it appears in print.



27 Time to add colour

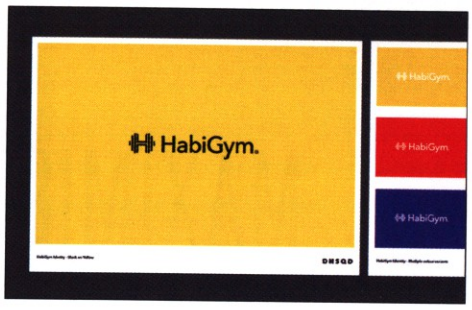
With newer versions of Illustrator (CS4 and up) you can integrate Adobe's Kuler app into your workspace. This enables you to quickly view different colour palettes. You can start building your library by going to Window> Extensions>Kuler. If you're running an older version, visit the Kuler site online (kuler.adobe.com).

28 Gradients

Try to avoid gradients in logos, but don't take that as an absolute rule. If you decide to use a gradient in your logo design, make sure to keep the colours smooth and harmonious (and to a minimum). You don't want it to become a neon rainbow. You can quickly access the Gradient dialog by hitting Cmd/Ctrl+F9.

29 Multiple backgrounds

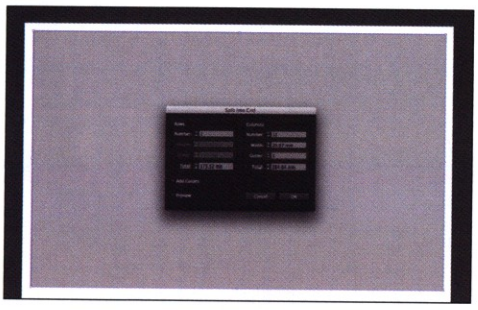
As well as experimenting with colour within the logo itself, make sure to demonstrate the logo to the client on a variety of background colours and shapes to help them visualise the logo in use. You can apply the same colours and styles to different shapes using the Eyedropper tool (I).



30 Create delivery templates

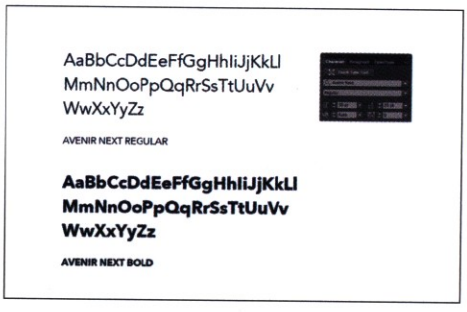
Now that the logo design is completed, it's time to switch your attention towards delivering it to the client. You can save templates to use for future logos by going to File>Save As>Illustrator Template. This is useful as you can add annotations and display multiple applications, swapping colours and text out quickly.

> "Give examples of the brand in use on relevant materials - think letterheads, business cards, van wraps or in our gym's case, water bottles. This helps the client to visualise their brand in use."



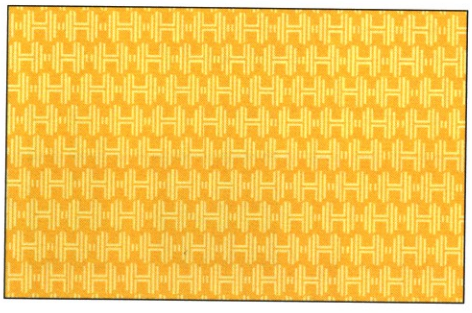
31 Work to a grid

You can create a grid to your artboard size by drawing a rectangle to fill the artboard, then going to Object >Path>Split Into Grid. Next, you need to define the number of columns and rows for your grid by entering the numbers in the dialog. This feature enables you to create consistent layouts for your presentation boards.



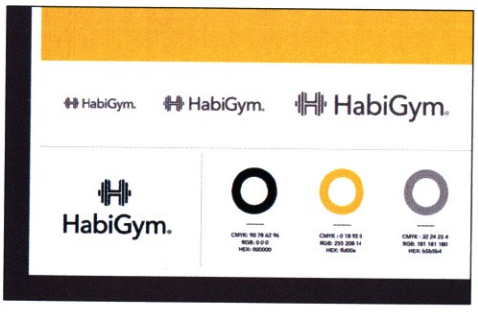
32 Choose an accompanying typeface

Determine a selection of fonts that work well with the brand for use in marketing materials. Think about cohesion with the brand – you don't want to undo all your hard work by selecting any old font. Consider selecting a whole type family rather than a single font for maximum versatility.



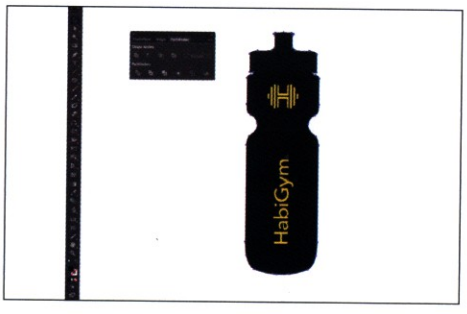
33 Other uses...

Think about how your logos can be used in different ways, rather than just on its own. Here is a repeat pattern of the logo marque that could be used on the HabiGym print material. Illustrator patterns enable you to speedily create repeating patterns. Simply select your object and go to Object>Pattern>Make.



34 Show your thinking

Clients don't always appreciate your efforts at selecting colours and fonts, so show them. Get into a habit of creating style guides for designs, adding any CMYK colour breakdowns, Hex codes or Pantone codes, and font names. This is useful to future designers working on projects as it ensures brand consistency.



35 Demonstrate your vision

Give examples of the brand in use on relevant materials – think letterheads, business cards, van wraps or in our gym's case, water bottles. This helps the client to visualise their brand in use, and helps demonstrate that the brand you have designed is versatile enough to work as required.

36 Group and expand your elements

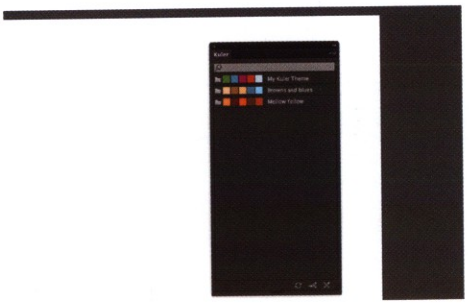
If you're supplying Illustrator native .ai files to clients, you don't want your hard work to be undone as soon as they open the file. Make sure all your logo lock-ups are grouped (Cmd/Ctrl+G) and all your fonts are converted to paths. That way it isn't substituted by Illustrator if they don't have the correct font installed.

MAXIMISE YOUR KULER POTENTIAL

Adobe's Kuler is a great tool for creating and sharing colour schemes, but it's far more than a place to store swatches. And it can be very useful for your branding projects...

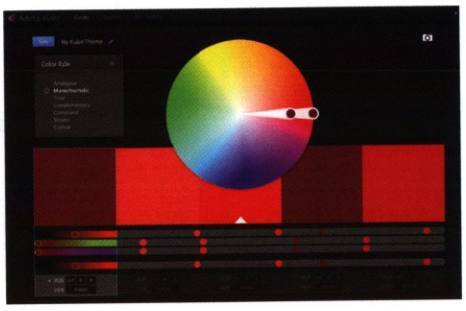
Adobe Kuler is an extremely popular tool for generating colour schemes that are both aesthetically pleasing, and also mathematically-based. While it might seem a simple service, the ability to upload, generate, share and download themes extends its use beyond simply choosing an arbitrary set of nice colours. And of course, it integrates beautifully with Illustrator.

For a few versions now, Illustrator has had a panel dedicated to Adobe Kuler, but the latest incarnation (CC) has some workflow improvements that make it an essential tool for both choosing and managing your colour palettes. Here's how to make the most of Kuler – a tool that can be invaluable for experimenting with colour schemes in logo and branding projects.



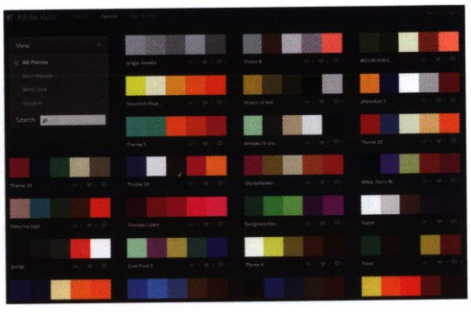
1 The Kuler panel

Everything Kuler-related is handled through the Kuler panel. Open a document in RGB mode and then choose Window>Kuler from the menu. The Kuler panel shows all your currently available Kuler themes. Click the Settings button at the top-right corner of the panel and verify that you're signed into your Creative Cloud account – essential for maximising Kuler.



2 Launch the Kuler website

At the bottom of the panel there are three different buttons. The middle button provides a quick way to launch the Kuler website, and automatically log in. Click that button now and agree to any terms and conditions as necessary to reach the basic theme generation screen. As you're now logged in, any new themes you create will be available to Illustrator.

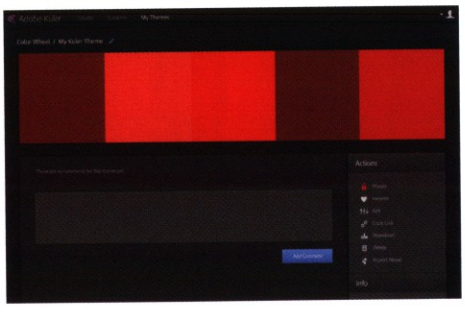


3 Browse existing themes

One of the best features of Kuler is the ability to get inspiration from other users. Click on the Explore tab at the top of the website, and then browse through the themes that other users have contributed. Sort according to popularity, most used, random or all themes. You can also search for a particular theme based on keywords supplied by the designer.

4 Create your own version

Once you've found a theme you like, hover over it and click on the Edit button that pops up over the top of the colour swatches. This will then return you to the Theme Editor window. This is where you can make changes to the theme by selecting colour blocks and pulling the sliders. You can also edit the values directly, or use the colour wheel.

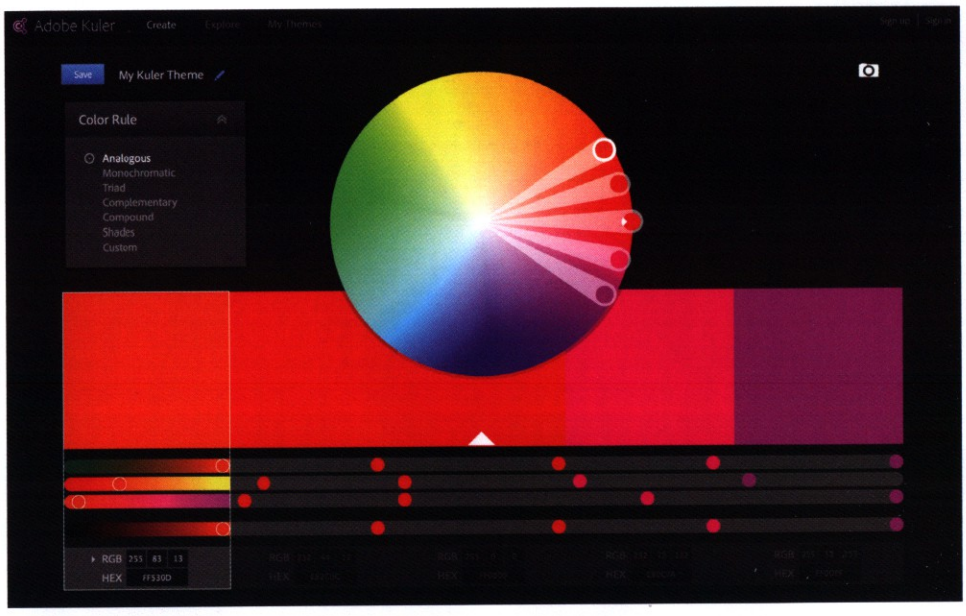


5 Make it yours

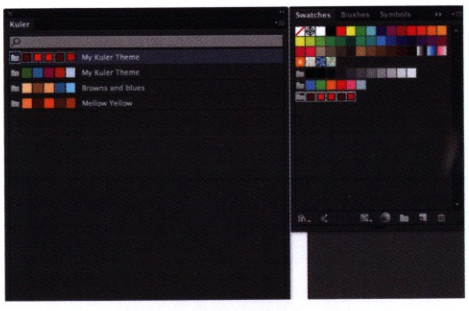
Click on the Save button to store your theme within your account. This will secure a permanent copy of your theme that you can retrieve in the future, and also enables you to access the different sharing and collaboration tools that you'll be using in the next step. Once saved you can add comments to your theme, making notes for future use or reference.

6 Check in Illustrator

Now that you've created a new theme within Kuler, it's time to return to Illustrator and check to see that it's copied over. Within the Kuler panel, click on the left-most of the three buttons at the bottom. This refreshes the panel with the Kuler service, automatically downloading any changes or new themes you've developed in-between updates.

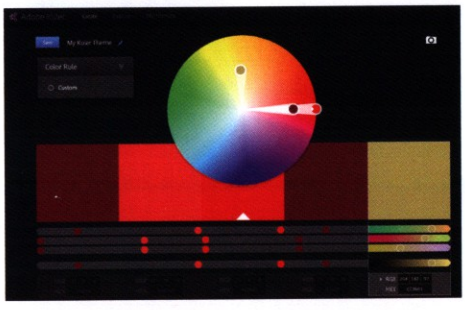


"One of the best features of Kuler is the ability to get inspiration from other users."



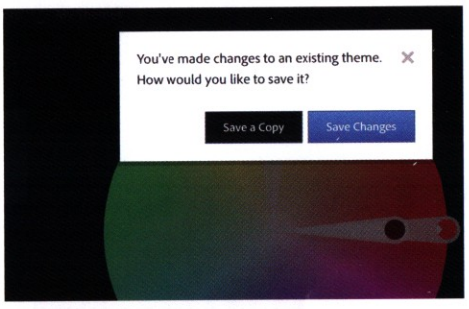
7 Add theme to your swatches

Now your theme is appearing inside the Kuler panel within Illustrator, you can easily add the theme's colours to your Swatches panel. Highlight the theme and click the flyout menu button at the top-right of the panel, and choose the Add To Swatches option. Once in the swatches, the link to Kuler is broken, even if you update the theme within Kuler itself.



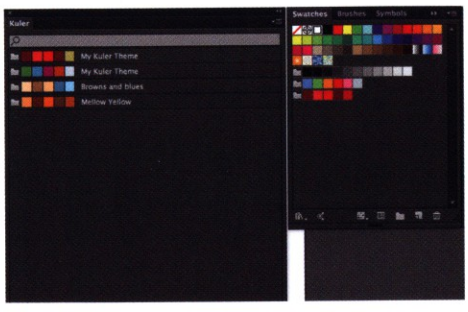
8 Edit your theme

Editing a theme is just as easy as creating one. First, click on the Kuler website button at the bottom of the Kuler panel within Illustrator. This will launch the Kuler service website and log you in. Once you're logged in, select the theme you'd like to edit, and click the Edit button. Make a change to the colour theme that's obvious enough to recognise.



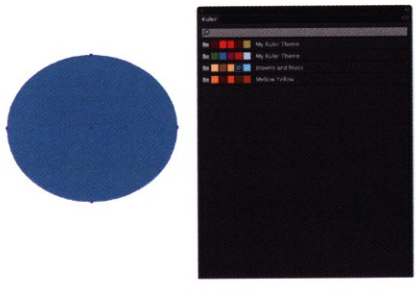
9 Save the change

Once you're happy with your edits, click on the Save button at the top-left. Because this is an existing theme that you've adapted, Kuler will give you the option to either save the changes over the top of the existing theme, or to generate a new theme from the new version. Both are useful in different contexts, but here we will save over the top of the existing theme.



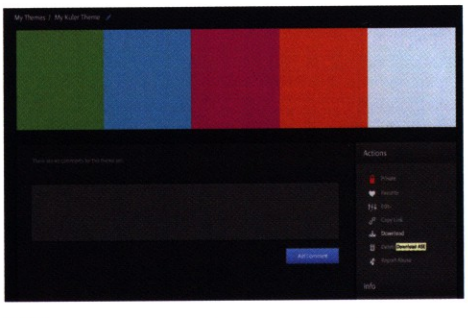
10 Refresh Kuler in Illustrator

Return to Illustrator and click the Refresh button at the bottom-left of the Kuler panel. Once Illustrator has finished connecting to and syncing with the Kuler service, you'll see the theme you edited has updated to show your changes. However, any swatches you had created from the theme have remained unaffected by your alterations.



11 Use colours directly

There's no need to add a Kuler theme to your swatches to be able to use the colours within it. Simply select an object on your Artboard, and make sure you've got the foreground or background targeted in the wheel (depending upon which you'd like to colour). Now click directly within the Kuler panel on the colour swatch you'd like to use, .



12 Downloading and sharing swatch files

If you're working with other designers who don't have access to Kuler, you can export your themes using the Adobe Swatch Exchange (ASE) format. Log into Kuler using the button at the bottom of the Kuler panel and choose the theme you'd like to share. Then click the Download button to grab an ASE file. You can also email a link to the theme from the same page.

Medicine
Open house. 37 Turner Street. Manchester. M4 5EN. 0161 - 270 - 8974.
cine
Medicine
Open house. 37 Turner Street. Manchester. M4 5EN. 0161 - 270 - 8974.
medicinemanchester.com
@medicinemcr
Medicine
Cocktails
Le Dernier Mot
Oaxaca Old Fashioned
Al Capone
Tazmanian Devil
Long Island Ice Tea
The Old Sea Dog
Designated Driver
Bottled Beers
Soft Drinks
Champagne (750ml) (full bottles also available)
White Wine (175ml) (full bottles also available)
Red Wine (175ml) (full bottles also available)
Rose Wine (175ml) (full bottles also available)
Sides
Fries
Mashed Potatoe
Broccoli & Cauliflower
Onion Rings
Eggs (to order)
Grilled Peppers
Salad
Mixed Bread Basket
Medicine
Duncan Harper
Director
duncan@medicinemanchester.com
Stephen Chapman
General Manager
stephen@medicinemanchester.com
Helen Wright
Director

BRANDING WORKFLOW

KEY SKILLS
- Using Artboards effectively.
- Managing Layers.
- Swatches and fifth colours.
- Bleed best practice.

AUTHOR: Andy Cooke

BEST PRACTICE

BRAND COLLATERAL MADE EASY

How to make full use of the Artboard feature in Illustrator to easily construct and output a wide range of brand collateral...

A BRANDING MASTERCLASS

Andy Cooke, www.thisisandycooke.com

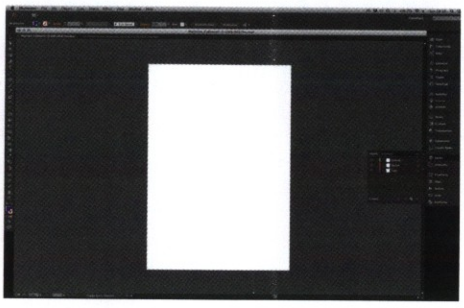
Throughout this guide we will go over how to set up and work within Illustrator on varied collateral for a company, by using Illustrator's Artboards feature to the full. Artboards make creating a variety of items that need to be printed easy, by eliminating the need to switch between document windows. Being able to toggle from a work-in-progress layer to an artwork layer is priceless, and having everything in one document makes comparing and contrasting the design and layout of pieces of branding collateral a breeze. We shall cover a vast array of material from utilising the Recolour Artwork tool, to de-mystifying the built in Pantone swatch books. We shall also go through setting-up and outputting files for the printer. So let's get started...

CREATING BRANDING COLLATERAL

Techniques to get through the challenge of designing a range of branded assets in Illustrator...

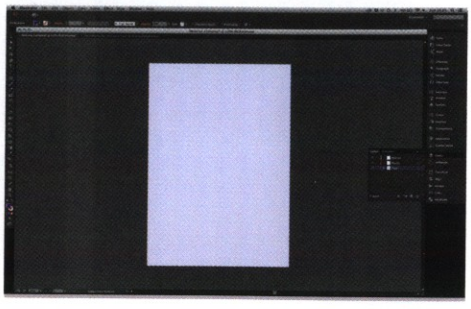
1 Basic setup

You should already have the identity/logo designed in another document, so working with printed collateral, an A4 template is a good starting point. There's no bleed as you will only have basic block colour that will need trimming in print – and an RGB profile, for now. Uncheck Align New Objects To Pixel Grid and hit OK.



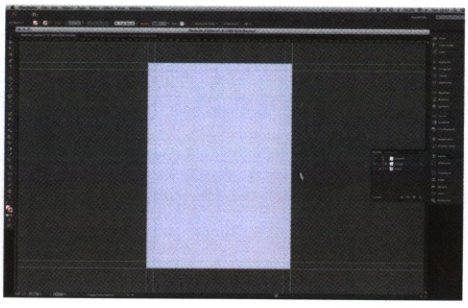
2 Prepare your layers

You've now got a blank A4 page, and the design file in a separate window to copy and paste in. Now create three layers: Paper, which will be a representation of base paper stock; Design which is the closest visual representation to the finished item; and Artwork – the print-ready layer which will be exported later.



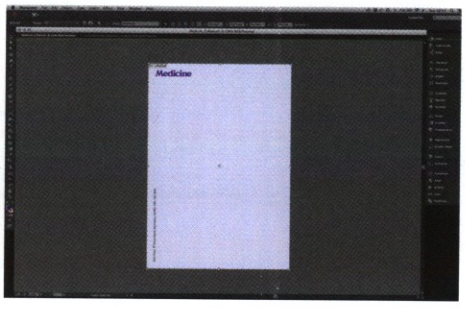
3 Simulate the paper stock

With the Paper layer selected, the next stage is to simply draw a box. Once you have drawn your box you need to fill it with the colour that matches the real-life stock as closely as possible. This will help to give you the closest representation to the final finished product when designing.



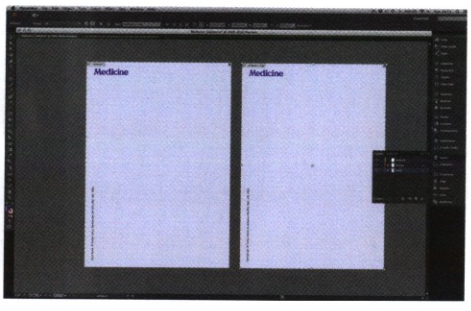
4 Set up a margin

Set a 10mm margin for the printed items. Our identity is quite text heavy in places so a bit of breathing room would be a good idea to make it look a little lighter on the page. It's important that the guidelines are created on the Design layer – to make things easier and more practical when working on it later on.



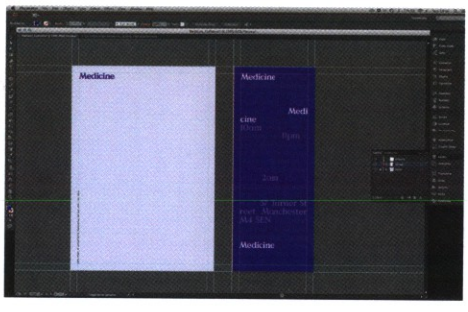
5 Maximise the Artboard

Start to drop elements on to the Artboard. From this point, you can start to use the Artboard functionality to it's full potential, working within one AI document to create other collateral elements (and see how they work next to each other). Select the Artboard tool, click on your Artboard, and name it 'Letterhead'.



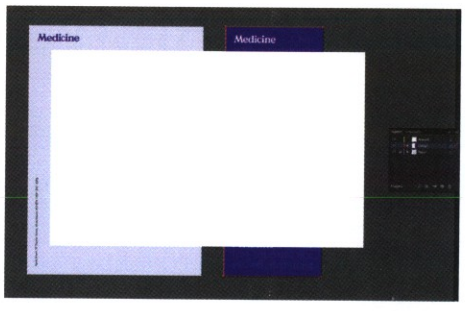
6 Duplicate the Artboard

Select the Artboard tool and then click on the Artboard – so the edge turns to dashed lines. Opt/Alt+click and drag across to the right to duplicate the Artboard, taking the elements with it. Ensure elements that require duplicating are on unlocked layers. Keep naming your Artboards as you go.



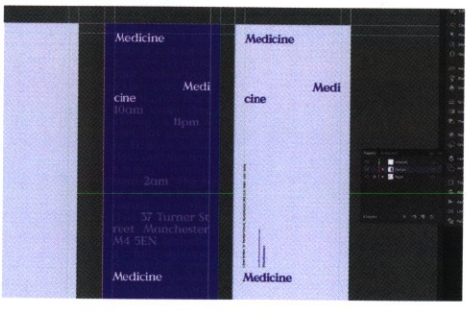
7 Resize your Artboard

Use the Control bar to edit the dimensions of the Artboards. Show guides (Cmd/Ctrl+;) and Click+Opt/Alt and drag the guides to duplicate them to your new Artboard. Having smart guides on (Cmd/Ctrl+U) helps with snapping. Change the elements on the 'Paper' and "Design' layers for these new bits of collateral.



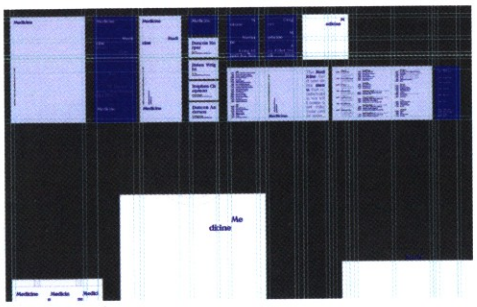
8 Toggle guides to aid visualisation

You can toggle guides on and off by using Cmd/Ctrl+;. This helps with the visualisation part of the process. Notice that the bright blue background on the 'Flyer' Artboard is on the Design layer – this is because this will be achieved by printing this rather than having that colour paper stock.



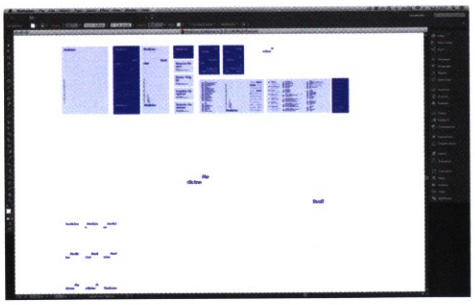
9 Design the reverse

Opt/Alt+click and drag an Artboard to create the reverse side. Tweak the design for the reverse side, ensuring that any paper representation is copied onto the 'Paper' layer. Select the vertical guides and then copy and paste them (using Cmd/Ctrl+V to paste in place) onto the reverse side Artboard .



10 Downhill from now on

From this point onwards, it is a case of working out what extra elements you need for the design, and creating new Artboards to the right sizes that they would be in print. Many of the same techniques with guidelines and Artboard options are duplicated throughout the process.



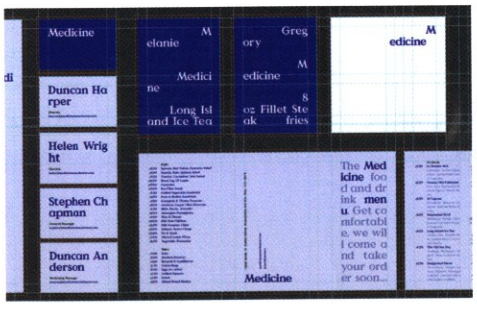
11 Extra check

As an extra step to check your design and how it will all sit together, hit Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+H – this will give you a white background without any Artboard markers. This feature is perfect for shirt and bag visualisations. In addition, it helps to keep the Artboard size the same as the print area.

12 Begin to export to print

We can now start the process of exporting things for print. This is where the Artwork layer comes into play. Start by hitting Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+H to go back to the normal view, and hit Cmd/Ctrl+Opt/Alt+P for the Document Setup window. Change the Bleed to 3mm in each box.

> "The bleed guides show up as red outlines around the Artboards. If the Artboards are closer than 6mm, the bleed guides will overlap – so ensure that gap is there."



13 Mind the gap

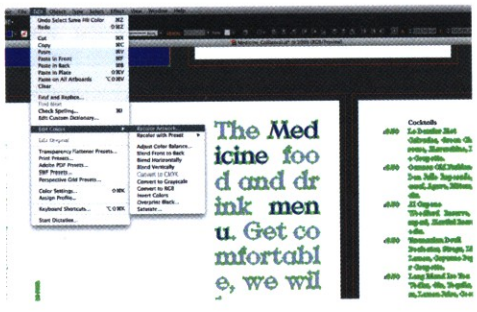
The bleed guides show up as red outlines around the Artboards. If the Artboards are closer than 6mm, the bleed guides will overlap – so ensure that gap is there. Some of the elements that have blue backgrounds that will be printed. They will need to be re-sized to meet the red lines – do this on the Artwork layer.

14 Copy all the content

Because the guidelines are on the Design layer, when you select Cmd/Ctrl+; only the bleed lines show on the Artwork layer. Copy all the content from the Design layer onto the Artwork layer. As with any areas needed with bleed, outline all content (using Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+O). This will make colour editing easier.

15 Changing colours

So far you have been designing in RGB Blue, but we're going to change it all to red. By selecting an element in the RGB Blue, and then going to Select>Same>Fill Colour, it will select all elements in the document in the same colour. Using the Colour panel you can switch the colours really easily at the clients request.

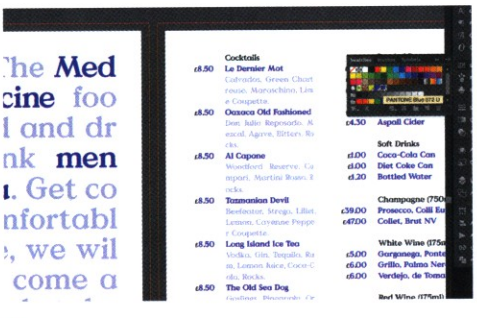


16 Change it back

After seeing it in red, the client doesn't like it! Use the same Select>Same>Fill Colour to change it to a new colour or back to the original. You need to go through the same element selection process to make it ready for print. Select all the same colour once again and go to Edit>Edit Colors>Recolour Artwork.

17 Re-assign selected colours

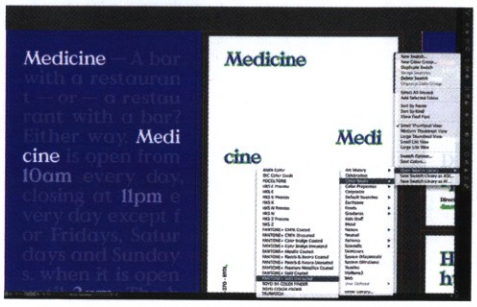
Making sure Recolour Art is selected in the Assign section, click on the icon below Print. From here you can re-assign the selected colour to a print version – or in this case – a Pantone Solid Uncoated shade in the Colour Books option. It automatically re-assigns all selected elements to the closest match in the system.



18 Check the colour is correct

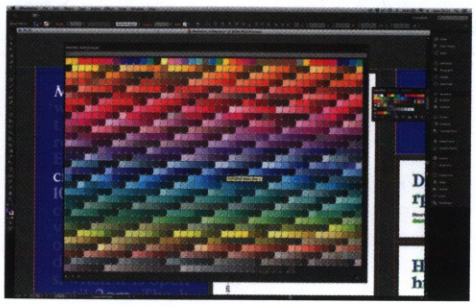
You'll notice that the colour has changed – don't worry, it's just the onscreen preview – and a new swatch has appeared in the Swatches panel (hover and it will tell you the Pantone swatch number). It's good practice at this stage to check that this Pantone reference is colour that you want (look in your Pantone swatches book!).

CREATING BRANDING COLLATERAL CONTINUED...



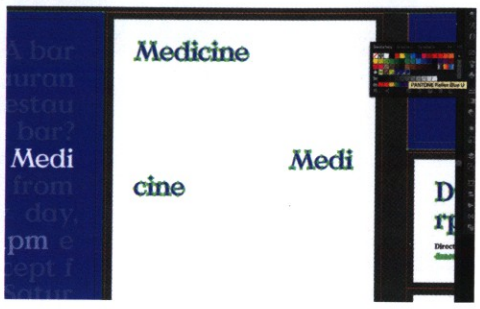
19 Swatch panel

If you decide that the Pantone isn't quite right, and think a richer finish from the swatch book might be better, it's easy to edit. Select>Same>Fill Color as per before when selecting a Pantone object. Open up the Swatch panel, click on the small arrow on the right hand side, and head to the same colour book as before.



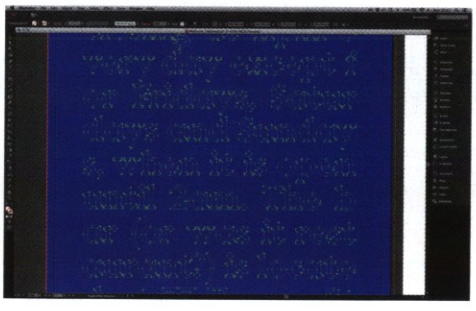
20 Hover over your favourite

Here you can see all the shades and colours in that particular swatch book, and change the colour of all your elements by simply clicking. This way of approaching colour can potentially help you come across a look or theme you had perhaps dismissed at an earlier design stage.



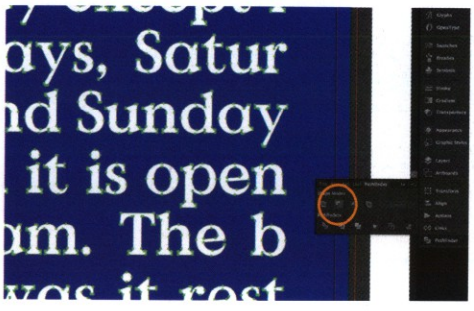
21 Delete old swatches

A check on the regular Swatches panel shows that the elements on the Artwork layer have all switched, as they are all still selected. The colour on-screen hasn't changed, but you know it's changed from the swatches panel. Deselect everything and delete any previously-created swatches.



22 White over blue

There are elements in the designs that appear as white over blue. This is actually the paper colour – and where it appears as semi-transparent white, it's semi-transparent blue. We need to fix this. On the flyer, select the paragraph of text, copy it, and then hit Cmd/Ctrl+8, turning the objects into a Compound Path.

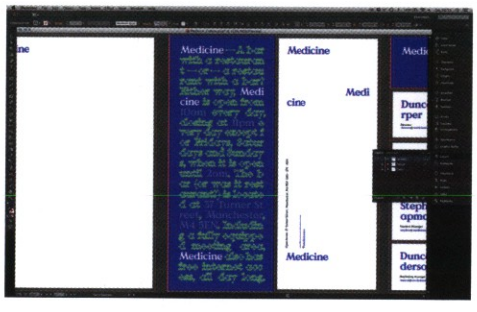


23 Minus Front option

The next step in this process is to select the blue box underneath, and then open the Pathfinder panel (Window>Pathfinder). By selecting the Minus Front option, the text appears stamped out of the blue. Now hit Cmd/Ctrl+F to paste your text back in front of the box.

24 Delete the letters

Select the Eyedropper tool (I) and select an area of solid blue. Because opacities have been previously set, this data will remain, only instead of white, it will be blue colour data. Any text that was designed to be solid white will appear solid blue. Click the Direct Selection tool and go through the letters and delete them.



25 Tweaking opacities

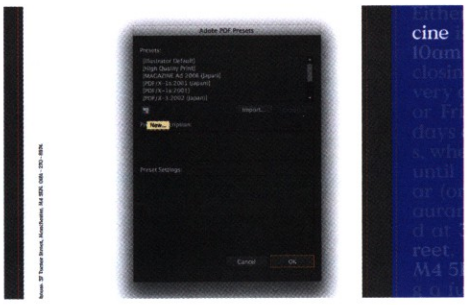
Because the opacities have essentially been switched, you need to tweak it. For this use Select> Same >Opacity. When clicking on a letter that was darker on the 'Design' layer, you can select them and tweak them so it looks right design-wise (slightly darker) Do the same with the bits that should be brighter.

26 The black text elements

Next, turn to the black text elements. You can use the same process as before (Select>Same>Fill Colour) and then find the right Pantone shade in the correct Colour Book from the Swatches panel. The on-screen preview will change, but in print it will appear as the correct Pantone swatch.

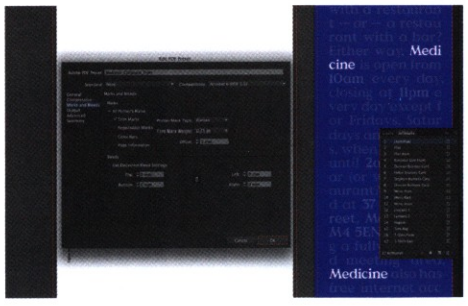
27 Getting ready for print

Time to think about outputting these files for print. If you forgot to name your Artboards as you went, do it now and re-organise them into a logical order in the Artboards panel. The 'Paper' and 'Design' layers have to be deleted for exporting, so it's important here that you save your file under a new file name.



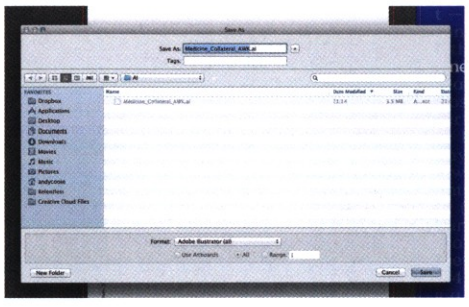
28 Create PDF presets

To make the exporting process easier, you need to create a couple of PDF Presets for the two different types of PDFs that need producing. In order to do this go to Edit>Adobe PDF Presets>New. This will bring up the PDF dialog box which appears when exporting. You now need to name your presets.



29 PDF options

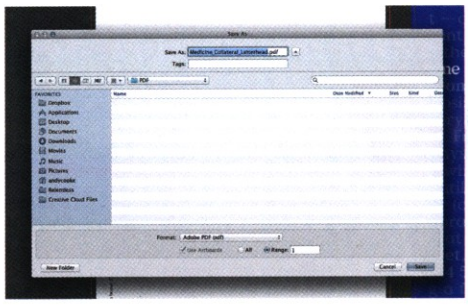
Don't worry about Compression as you're only working with vector elements. In Marks and Bleeds tick Trim Marks. Check the Offset is on 3mm and Use Document Bleed settings is unticked. In Output tick No Colour Conversion. For the parts that need bleed marks, alter as needed in the Marks and Bleeds box.



30 Export individually

Some elements require bleed marks, and some require trim marks – so export each element individually. This takes longer, but then you know each will be done correctly. Firstly, the Letterhead (Artboard 1). It only needs paper edge trim marks. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+S to Save As.

> "Some elements require bleed marks, and some require trim marks – so make sure you export each element individually. This takes longer, but then you know each will be done correctly."

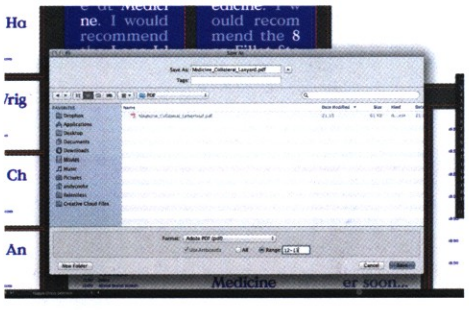


31 Switching format

Switch the format to PDF, select a new folder and change the name of the file. Currently, it will save all Artboards under the setting you're about to enter. To change this, make sure Use Artboards is selected, and where it says All or Range, type in 1. This will only take into account that particular Artboard. Hit Save.

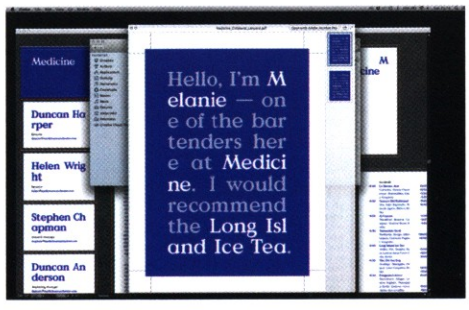
32 Output information

The next dialog box that appears is where all of the output information needs to be selected. Because you have already made the PDF Preset, you can select it from the list at the top, and select Save PDF. All done – just the rest of the collateral to go. Remember to keep saving as you go so no work is lost.



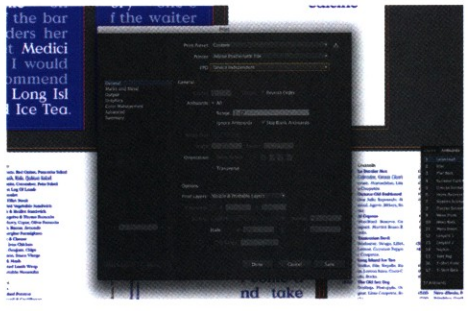
33 Range box

As you have organised and labeled your Artboards, you know when saving which these are from the panel that is still open. By editing the Range box when saving to '12-13' it selects just those two Artboards and you can go on to apply the correct Preset in the next dialog box.



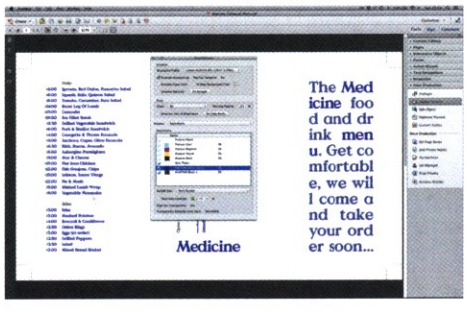
34 Check for mistakes

When saving each element for print, go through and double-check that all files have been exported how you wanted them to be. Also, this is now a really good time to double-check any spelling mistakes. The last thing you want is for your collateral to come back from the printer with spelling errors.



35 Check your printer

Other items, such as the menu, are double sided. Depending on spec, this may need a different exporting process, through the creation of a PostScript file. A printer may request this, but most printers can work from a regular PDF. Something worth checking out, though.



36 Final checks

To check that the PDF's are ready for print, you need to open them in Adobe Acrobat, and check the Output Preview. This lists the colours in the document, and you can uncheck any if necessary. You then have to save everything once more before sending. And you are finally finished!

THE 50 BEST LOGOS EVER

A panel of leading branding and identity design experts come together to bring you the definitive list of the 50 best logos ever. Gain exclusive insight into the creative processes behind the most recognisable identity design work in the world. If you love logos, you'll love this!

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STUDIO TRAINING

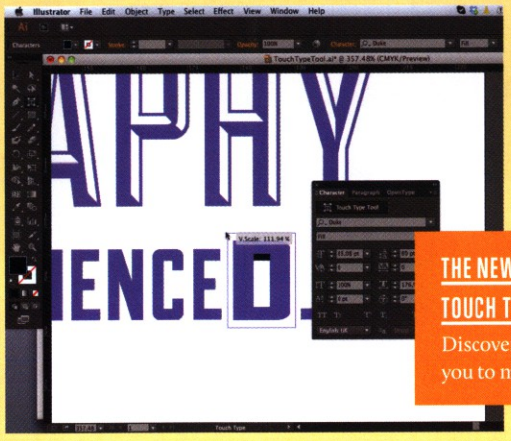
ILLUSTRATOR

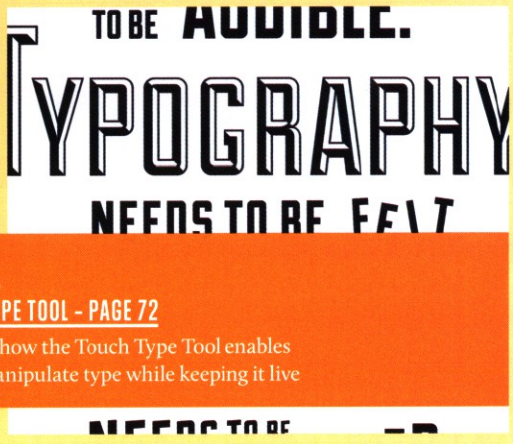
TYPE

Illustrator is a great tool for working with and manipulating type. Discover some key tips with this set of tutorials...

USING EVERYDAY TYPEFACES FOR ADVERTISING - PAGE 66

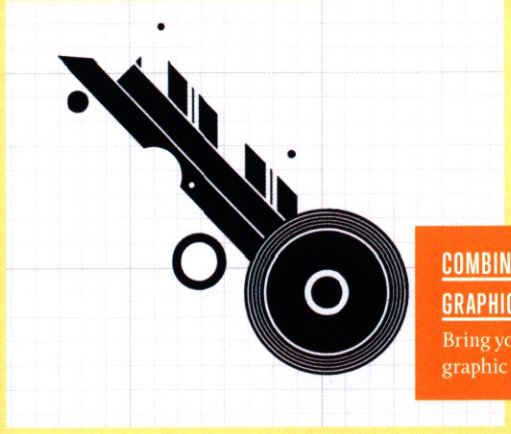
You don't need to buy in fonts to create a stunning advertising image

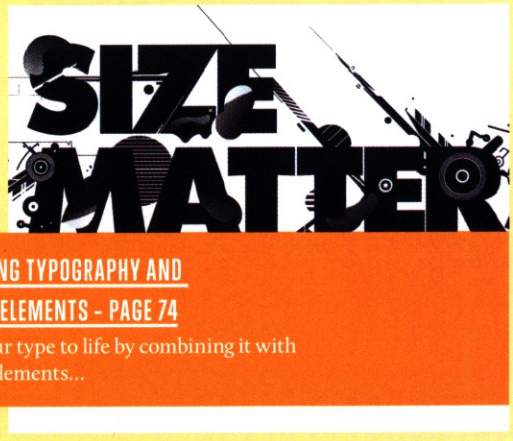




THE NEW TOUCH TYPE TOOL - PAGE 72

Discover how the Touch Type Tool enables you to manipulate type while keeping it live





COMBINING TYPOGRAPHY AND GRAPHIC ELEMENTS - PAGE 74

Bring your type to life by combining it with graphic elements...

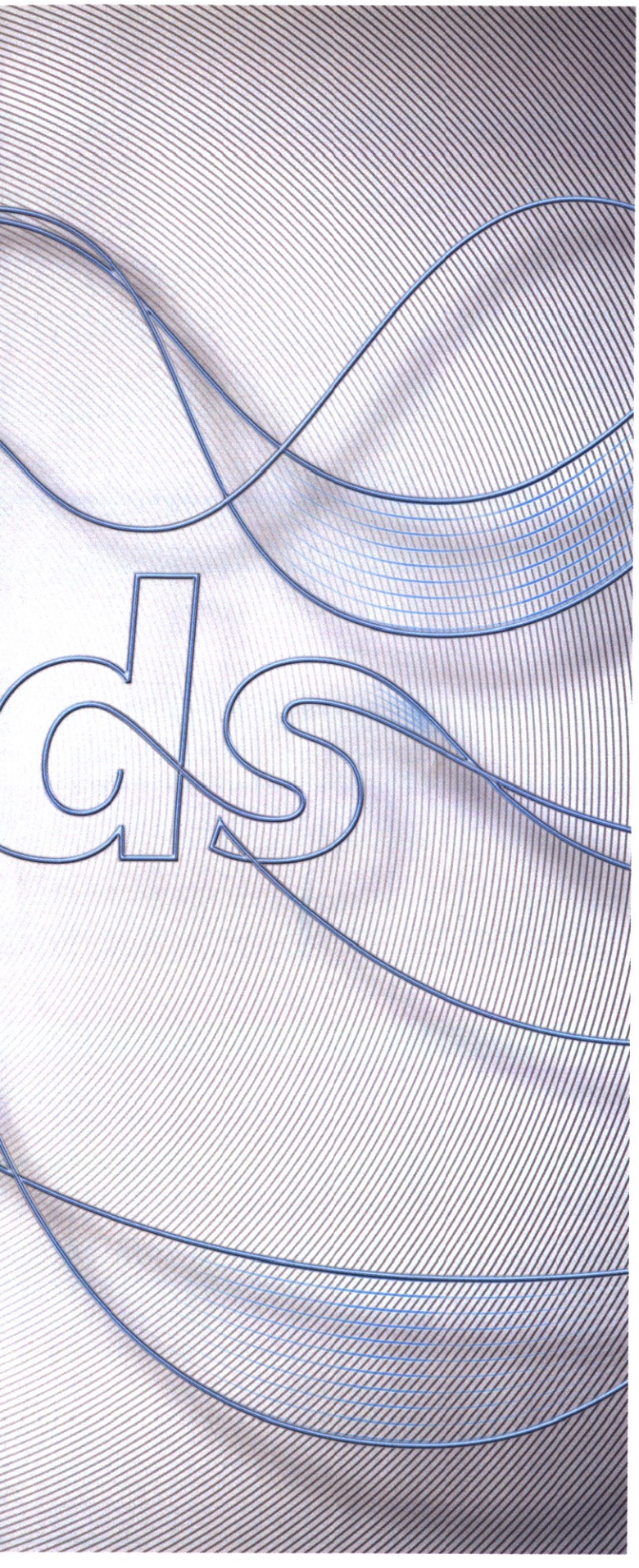
Moving
your soul
forward

TYPE MASTERCLASS

KEY SKILLS

- Using layers and effects wisely.
- Mastering anchor points.
- Experimenting with scale.
- Working with common typefaces in a creative way.

AUTHOR: Steven Bonner



EXAMPLE BRIEF

USING EVERYDAY TYPEFACES FOR ADVERTISING

There may be no need to buy in new fonts – the typefaces you have readily to hand can be just as effective in commercial art as custom lettering.

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR ASSETS

Steven Bonner, illustrator and letterer, www.stevenbonner.com

I draw letters for a living. I get to play and experiment with new styles every day as part of my commercial work, and I'm very lucky to have the chance to do so. However, there are times when you need to work quickly. Maybe there's a short deadline, or the client has a lower budget that doesn't afford custom type, or maybe the brief is perfect for a typeface you already have. There will definitely be occasions where the need to use what you have is important, but I aim to show that this doesn't mean compromising on quality or ideas.

Here, I'm using a fictional range of headphones as inspiration for an equally fictional advert where I want to show movement and style. Let's get to it.

ILLUSTRATED TYPE WITH STANDARD FONTS

How to take a standard font and create a stunning ad in Illustrator – with a little help from Photoshop...

1 It all starts with a pencil

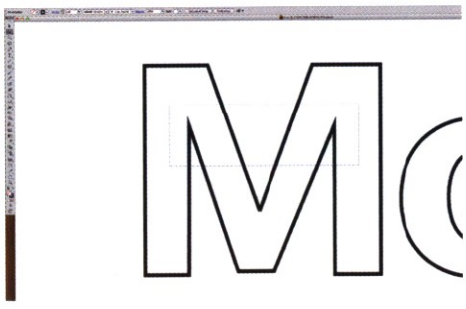
Get your pencils and paper out. The best way to start any job is to doodle first. Doodling is one of the best ways to develop and sketch out your concept ideas and thoughts . It gets good ideas in black and white, but more importantly, lets you quickly root out the ones that don't work or look ugly.

2 Choosing fonts and slogans

Create a new document in Illustrator (300mm x 222mm) and type out your text with the Type tool. For this example Myriad is a good choice as it gives a clean and contemporary feel. Arrange you're type in a nicely balanced way. You can use whichever slogan you like – the steps will remain the same.

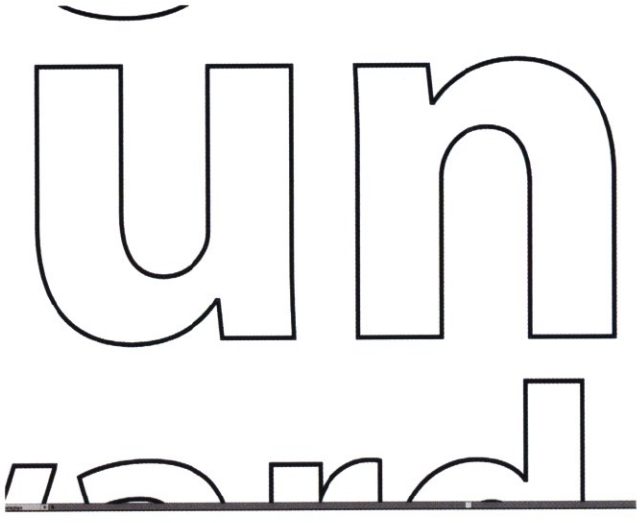
3 Grouping your letters

Next, you need to outline the type so that you have paths to manipulate. Select your type and go to Type>Create Outlines. Illustrator ungroups words in stages, so it ungroups by sentence, word, then letter. Remember this so you don't get caught trying to move letters and shifting whole words instead.



4 Customise your letters

You need to add a little individuality to this block of type, and to do that you need to manually adjust a few things. Firstly, straighten up the M using the Direct Selection tool (A on the keyboard). Select individual points and straighten up the slanting sides. You can adjust any letters to suit your own taste.

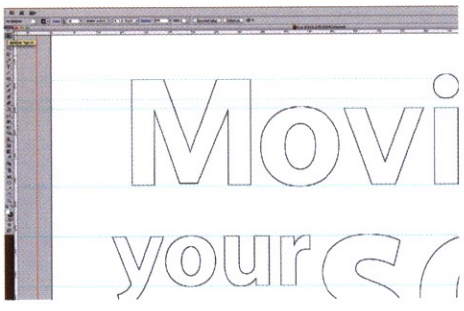


5 How to achieve a streamlined look

If you study typefaces, you'll see that many of them use small gaps where diagonal sections merge with verticals or other diagonals. This is because it helps to avoid ink traps when printing at smaller sizes, and it also help keep the overall colour of the type consistent. Myriad has these, but also subtly bends its diagonals in around halfway down to thin the stems out (again, helping the letters look consistent). You can removing these here as the type will be used as outlines. This will help if you want to achieve a more streamlined look.

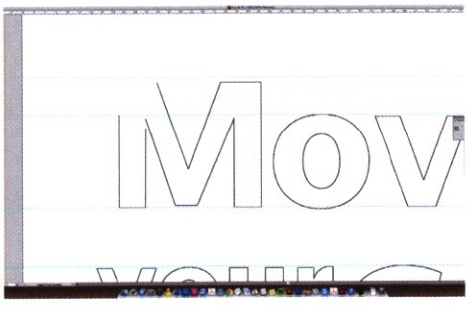
6 Adjustments complete

So in this screenshot, you can see the letters that have been adapted. Overall, the look is very similar to the original Myriad typeface, but you have adjusted the paths so they fit a more vertical and horizontal set of rules. This will be both helpful as you move along, but also individualises the type slightly more.



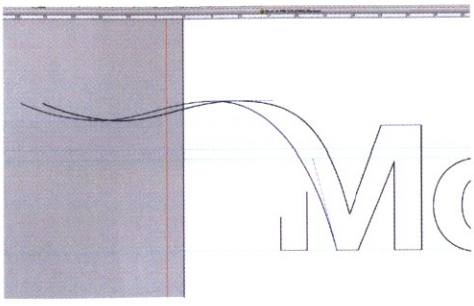
7 Adding essential guidelines

Next, add some guides to the artboard by enabling Rulers (View>Rulers>Show or Cmd/Ctrl+R) and dragging them out of the ruler that borders the application window. These will help you visually measure where you need to draw other elements as you go along.



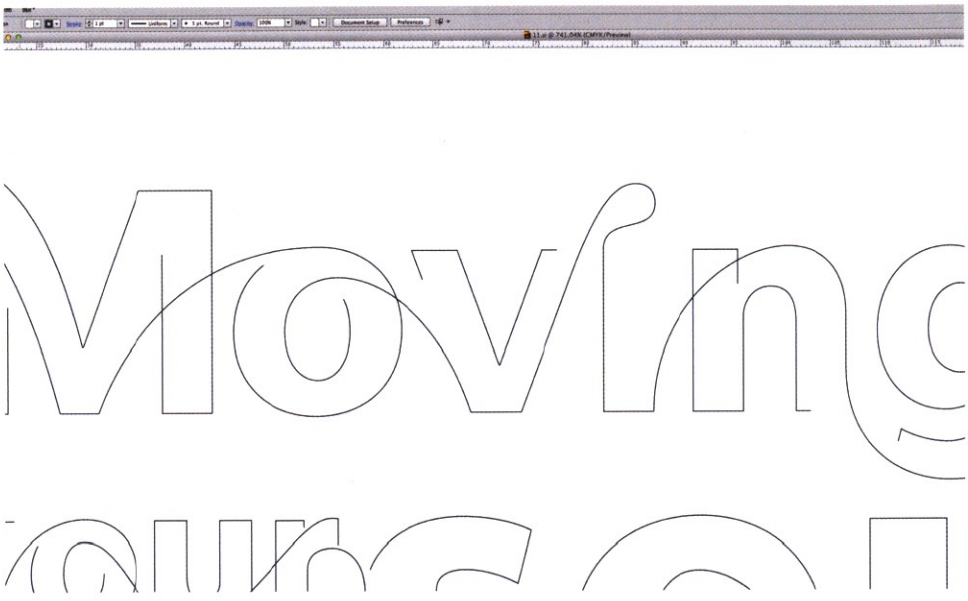
8 Plan before you start trimming

Now select the Scissors tool by hitting C on the keyboard and start to cut away parts of the first letter. You want to extend lines and makes connections between the letters to give a feeling of flow in the text so it's best to have an idea in mind of what you are planning to do before you start trimming.



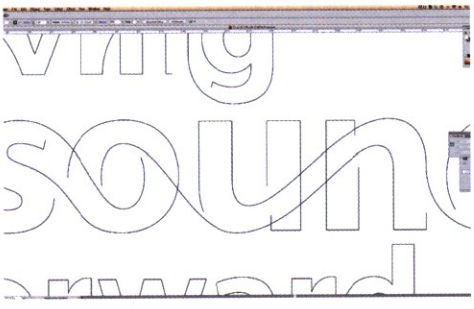
9 Draw on your new lines

With the first cuts made, switch to the Pen tool (P on the keyboard) and draw new parts to the lines you've left open. A tip when using the Pen tool is to try to drag your handles on horizontal and vertical axis. This way, you can retain much tighter control of the resulting curves, and your work will be much cleaner. Try to overlap the lines and draw them in waves so the feeling of flow is accentuated.



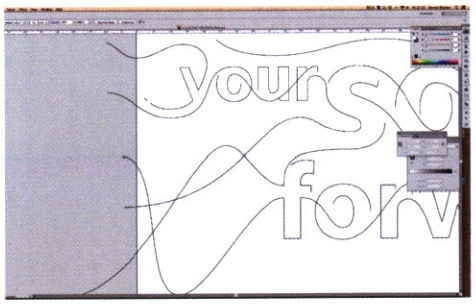
10 Linking the letters

Now start linking the other letters together in the same way but cutting with the Scissors tool in places where you can see links with other letters appearing. For example, the diagonals on the 'M' and 'V' are perfect for flowing into the round forms of the 'O'.



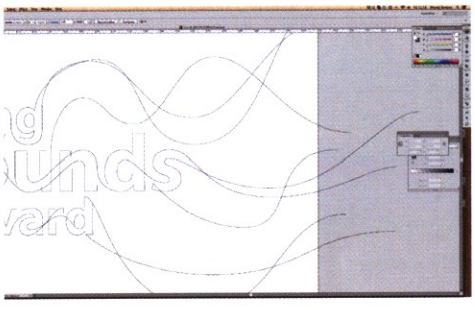
11 Create a balanced wave effect

Your next step is to carry on working in the same way over the next words and try to achieve a feeling of movement from one letter to the next. In this one, use a down-turning wave across the 'S' and 'O' and mirrored it in the way the 'U' merges into the 'N', creating a balanced wave effect.



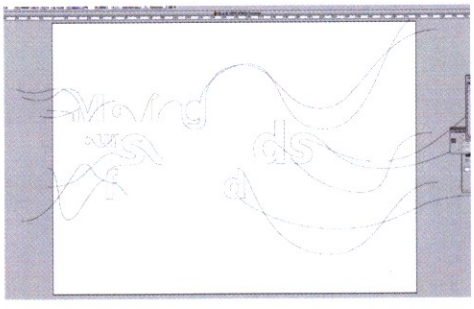
12 Adding form

Now, the type block is complete and you need to give it some more form as if the words appeared in the middle of an ongoing wave. In order to achieve that you need to draw more of the lines similar to those you did earlier – moving off to the left side of the art board. Try to make them as smooth as possible.



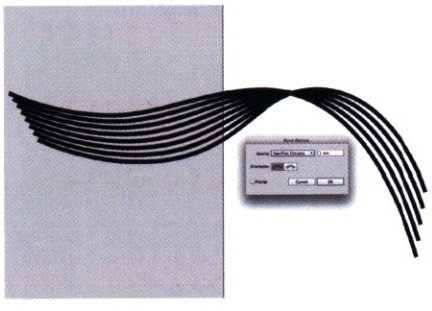
13 Gaining a sense of movement

Once the left side is complete, move on to the right-hand side. You should be seeing a nice sense of movement now, albeit in a rough form, so go back and take a look at everything and make sure you're happy. If you see any areas you're not happy with, find another way to link the letter until the balance improves.



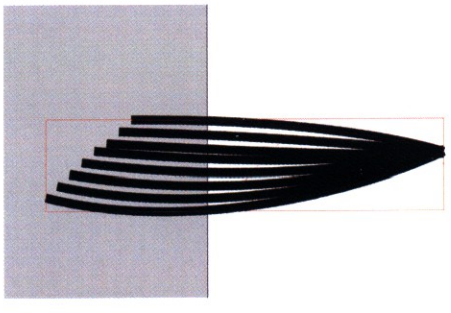
14 Blending lines

Now that you are happy with your type you need to start blending some of the lines that overlap. Adding areas of interest in these will make the final piece feel more coherent. Duplicate the layer with the type, then hide and lock the original. In the new layer, remove any lines that don't look useful or don't overlap.



15 Cut overlapping lines

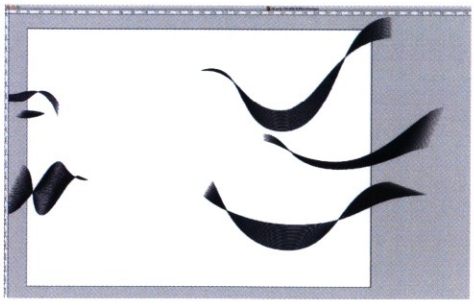
Using the Scissors tool again, start cutting the overlapping lines and removing the scraps. Next, select overlapping lines and create a blend between the two by hitting Shift+Opt/Alt+B on the keyboard, or going to Object>Blend>Make. Choose your desired look by playing with how many steps you want.



16 Mind the gap

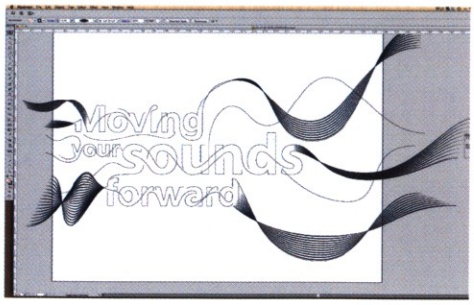
Be careful to keep and eye on the results. At times the Blend tool isn't perfect and you will probably need to manually adjust a few things. You can see here that the results aren't great. The gaps aren't equal, so you will possibly need to use the Direct Selection tool to fix things and even them up a bit.

ILLUSTRATED TYPE WITH STANDARD FONTS, CONTINUED...



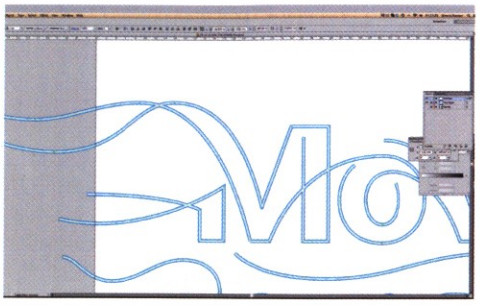
17 Creating blends

Carry on and create blends for the rest of the paths you've selected to work with. Be aware that you may need to redraw lines to get the blends to work properly, as the blends are determined by the direction the line was going when it was drawn. Some blends might overlap as a result.



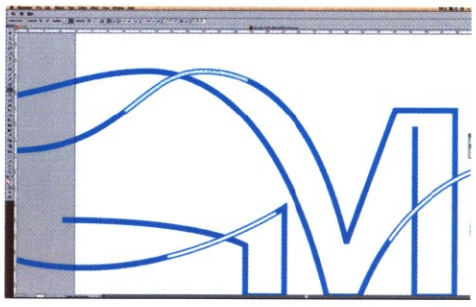
18 Taking stock

Let's take stock over where you are. You should have one layer with all our type, and another with out blends. Show both layers and step back to see if there's anything that needs attention at this point. Take a look at the overall colour of the piece here to make sure it's not too heavy and has an even feel to it.



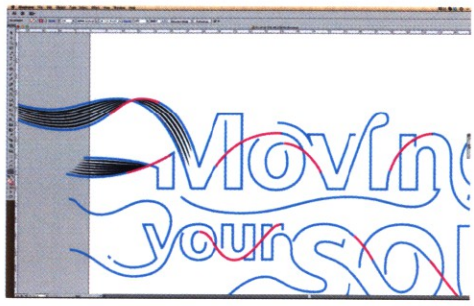
19 Thicken your type

Add effects to your lines. Photoshop doesn't recognise overlapping lines, so create these on a new layer. Select all your type and create a new layer. Thicken the type on the original layer and colour it. Then make the new layer of type white. You're not going to keep it white, but it makes the next stage easier.



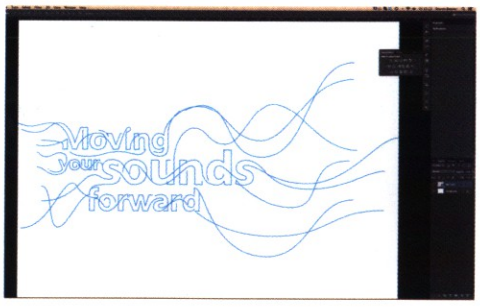
20 Cutting away areas

Again taking the Scissors tool, start cutting away areas that overlap other lines. These will be very important later on in Photoshop and take the piece from being mildly acceptable, to becoming a much higher quality piece of work with a much better finish.



21 Contrasting colours

Once you've completed the whole thing, show all your layers again. Make all the types strokes the same width, then colour them in contrasting colours. With them in different colours you can have one more double check over it all before taking it to Photoshop.

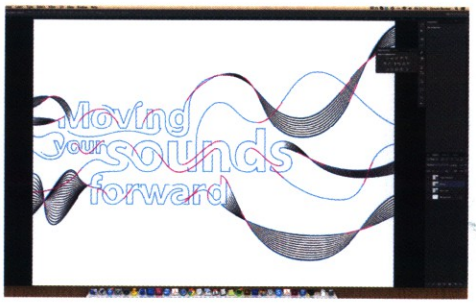


22 Copy and paste your layer

Switch to Photoshop and create a new document (300x222mm). Copy and paste your first type layer as a Smart Object and name the layer Main Type. Do not scale anything until all the vector pieces are in the document. Always scale all the vector elements as one.

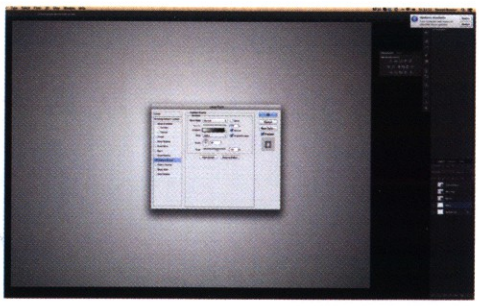
23 Organise it

Do the same thing for your blend layer and position it to align with the first one. Name it 'Blends' and position it underneath the type. Now is a good time to save. Don't forget to keep saving as you go along, not only to make sure you never lose any work but also so that you can go back to a previous version if required.



24 Overlaps

Finally, do the same thing for the overlapping type areas and name that layer 'Overlaps'. You need to make sure this layer is sitting above the others. The next bit of this sage is to create a radial background. Create a layer set to Multiply above the background and name it 'Radial'.

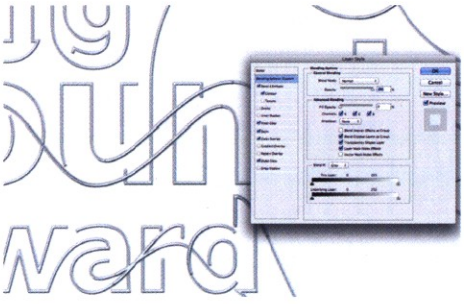


25 Gradient Overlay

Go to Layer Styles and check Gradient Overlay, default black to white gradient, Style = Radial, Reverse, Scale = 100. Make a new layer, select both new layers and hit Shift+E to merge the layers. Scale the layer to make the dark areas appear only at the edges for a more subtle look. Set the layer's opacity to 60 per cent.

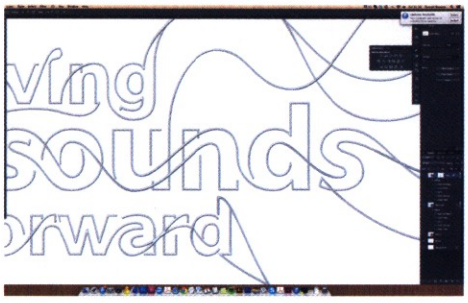
26 Adding Layer Styles

Now you want to start lifting the image and giving it a more 'techy', 'clean' feel to match the subject. Go to the main type layer and open up the Layer Styles options and make a few changes. Blending options: Fill Opacity = 0, check Layer Mask Hides Effects. Bevel & Emboss: Depth = 225, Size = 4, Angle = 120, Altitude = 65, Screen = 75, Shadow = 80. Check Contour. Inner Glow: Opacity = 100 (give it a blue colour of dbecf7), Choke = 18, Size = 6. Satin: Opacity = 10, Angle = 130, Distance = 5, Size = 2, with a Gaussian contour. Colour overlay: dff6fe set to soft light, Opacity = 100. Outer Glow: Colour set to d1cece, Opacity = 48, Noise = 7, Spread = 100, Size = 2.



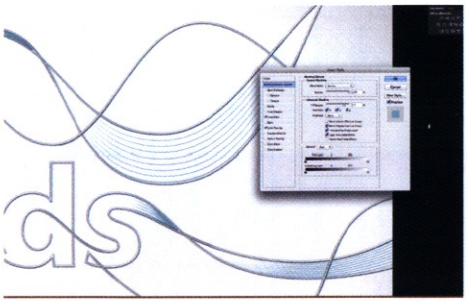
27 More Layer Styles...

Of course, if you want to experiment with the Layer Style effects in the previous step you can. The great thing about Layer Styles in Photoshop is that they are completely non-destructive. This means if you're not happy, you can simply double-click the Layer Styles icon in the Layers panel and go back and edit all the effects you applied. Anyhow, next you need to copy the Main Type layer style by going to Layer>Layer Style>Copy Layer Style. Show and select the 'Overlaps' layer and go to Layer>Layer Style>Copy Layer Style. This will give both layers the same style. Now you can see the edges of the 'Overlaps' layer – but that will be sorted in the next step.



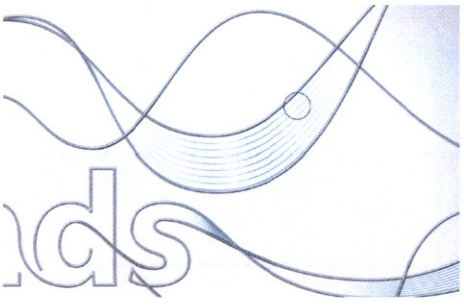
28 Overlaps layer

Earlier when you were setting the Layer Styles, you ticked Layer Mask Hides Effects in the Blending Options. This is where this comes in handy. Normally this is switched off by default and masking overlapping areas make for strange results – but this options means that when you paint a mask over a layer that uses effects, the effects are hidden too. Perfect for your needs. Select the 'Overlaps' layer and add a mask. Select a soft brush (B) and start painting over the visible edges of the lines. This will merge the overlapping layer with the base one so that the lines look like they're looping on top of each other, instead of merging like crossroads.



29 Inner Glow

Select the 'Blends' layer and go to Layer Styles. Reduce fill opacity to 75 per cent and check Layer Mask Hides Effects. Add an Inner Glow at: Colour = 005d83, Blend Mode = normal, Opacity =38, Noise =7, Choke =2, Size =5, Contour =Gaussian. Add a white overlay at 100 per cent opacity.



30 Paint out the edges

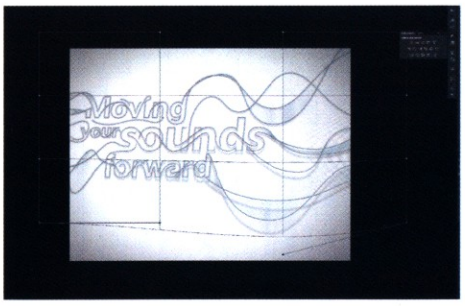
As you have done in previous stages, add a mask to the 'Blends' layer and start to paint out the edges to soften it and make it flow better. Think of the sheen you get from a vinyl record and add some variation in. Think about how light reflects off surfaces and how it is far from even on any given surface.

31 Smart Object layers

Next up, select all type based layers. Go to the menu in the Layers panel and choose New Group From Layers. This will collect these Smart Object layers in a folder. Now duplicate that folder, and hide the original. Select the new folder and hit Shift+E to merge it into one layer. Name this layer 'Full Type'.

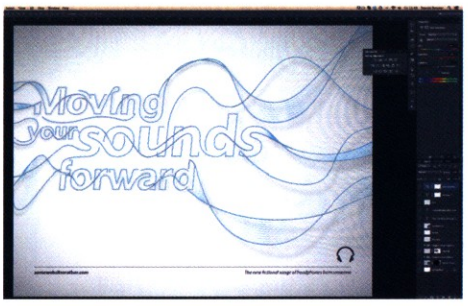
32 Shear the type

You now need to italicise the 'Full Type' layer by going to Edit>Transform>Shear and grabbing one of the anchors. This is making an oblique, not true italics. Next, add concentric circles drawn in Illustrator, and set them to 40 per cent opacity. You can use a mask to paint out areas to keep the type clean.



33 Warp it...

Duplicate the 'Full Type' layer, rename it 'Shadow' and lock its pixels to fill it with black. Now unlock it and apply a Gaussian Blur. Hit Command+T to apply a transform box to it. Hit the Warp Mesh icon in the Control bar and distort the shadow so it looks like it's starting to vary in distance from the canvas.



34 And you're done!

That's it, you're pretty much done. All you need to do from here is add a few Adjustment Layers so you can fine-tune colours and contrast. You can also add some tech lines at the base to give it some context as an advertisement image. In the final version you can also scale the type up so it has more punch.

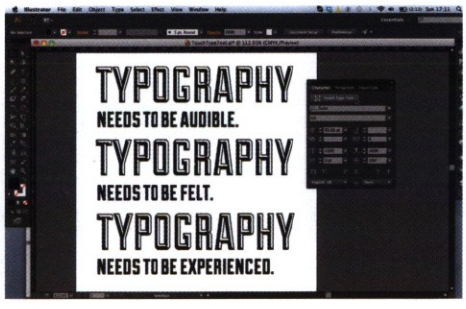
WORKING WITH THE TOUCH TYPE TOOL

The new Touch Type Tool in Illustrator CC is an excellent addition to Illustrator's toolset – enabling you to quickly edit and transform live text...

In this walkthrough we shall be looking at how you can get the most out of the new Touch Type Tool, which was introduced in Illustrator CC (named because it is compatible with touchscreen devices).

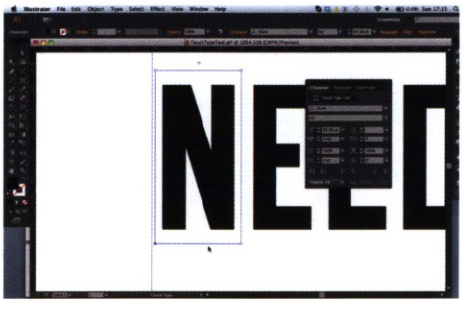
You don't have to use one of these devices though – a mouse, trackpad or Wacom tablet will work just as well, of course.

The Touch Type Tool enables you to edit and manipulate a single character in a piece of live text. You can scale proportionally, horizontally and vertically, rotate, and move single characters – and the text will remain live. Having more control over individual characters has never been so easy or so fast. So let's get going and see what you can do with this new tool.



1 First, find it!

Start by opening a new document in Illustrator CC and roughly style-up the text you wish to use. Now to locate the Touch Type Tool which can be found in the Tools panel under the Type tool (Shift+T) or it can be used via the Character panel found under Window> Type. Make sure Show Options is selected from the fly-out menu to see all the options.



2 The bounding box

Now with the Touch Type Tool selected, click on a character within your text frame and a bounding-box will appear around that character. Each corner of the bounding box has a handle and there is an additional handle above the box – above the top line in the middle. Each of these handles have a different function for editing the character.

3 Moving characters

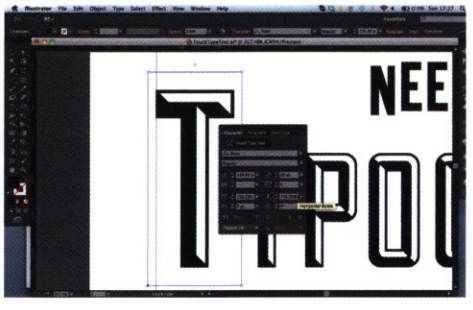
The first handle we'll look at is at the bottom left – this is the Move function. You can also move the character by clicking inside the bounding box. While positioning the character, its new position will be shown in blue with the original visible behind. This is useful if you're using the original letters for lining up. For more precise placement use the arrow keys.

4 Rotate...

The next handle is Rotate – positioned centrally above the bounding box. Hover over the handle and the Rotate icon will appear. Click and drag to rotate the character. You will notice when you move one character it will affect the position of the next – so it's likely you will need to adjust the tracking between each adjusted character.

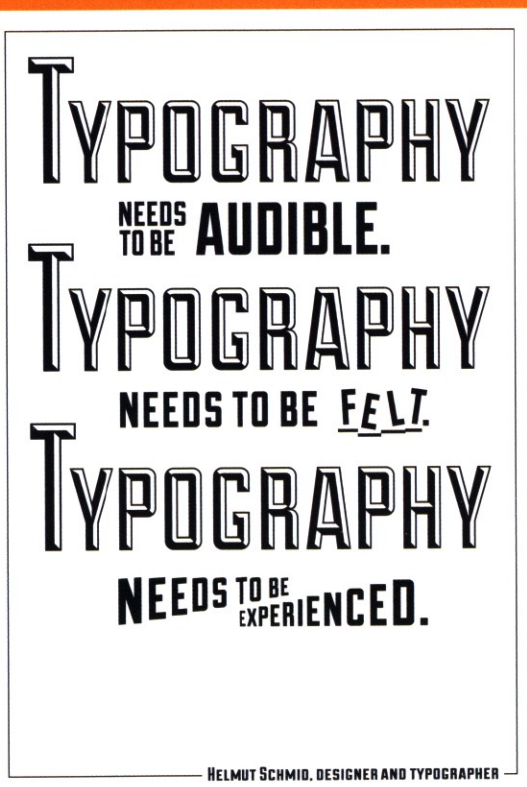
5 Proportional scaling

The top-left handle in the bounding box controls the proportional scaling of your character. After you've dragged the handle and repositioned your character, have a look in the Character panel. The percentage increase or decrease will be shown in the vertical and horizontal scale fields of the panel and will be displayed by your cursor.



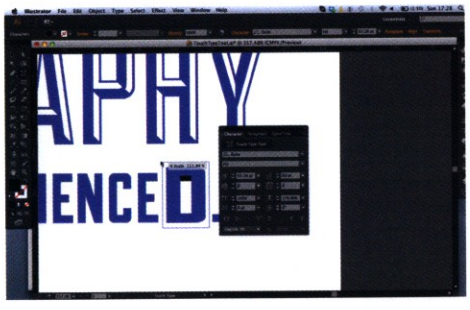
6 The Character panel

The useful thing about having the Character panel visible when using the Touch Type Tool is that it shows a visual reference of the changes you make. This can help you get more control and make precise incremental changes. It also gives you the details to quickly apply the same changes to other letters or to return it back to its original state.



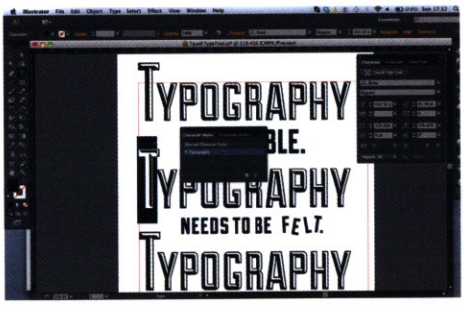
HELMUT SCHMID, DESIGNER AND TYPOGRAPHER

"Smaller adjustments will work better as the character will begin to look deformed the bigger the changes you make."



7 Vertical and horizontal scaling

The final two handles control the vertical (top left) and horizontal (bottom right) scaling. Vertically and horizontally scaling text will work better with some fonts than others. Smaller adjustments will work better as the character will begin to look deformed the bigger the changes you make. The percentage change can be seen in the Character panel.

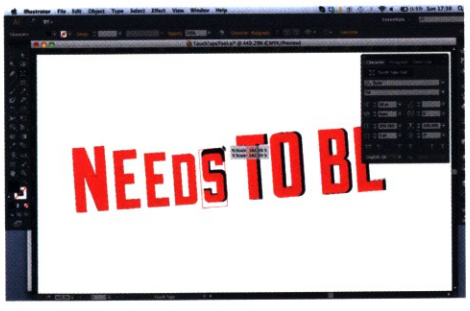


8 Quick character changes

You can't make changes to multiple letters in one go, but you can easily use the Eyedropper tool to duplicate styles. Alternatively, you can cut and paste letters and the applied formatting will remain. And because the text is live you can simply change the character. Another option is to create a character style that you can then apply to individual characters.

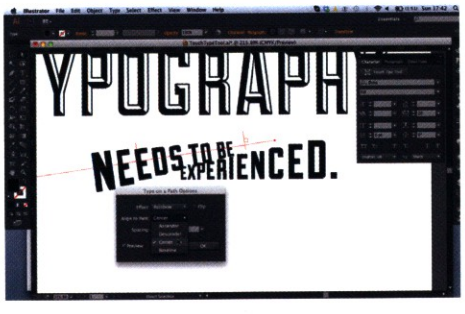
9 Selecting characters

You will find at times certain characters can be difficult to select with the Touch Type Tool – especially when you have characters stacked. A way around this is to change the size of your text frame so you're focusing just on the characters you need to work on at that time. Alternatively adding a soft-return might create the space you need.



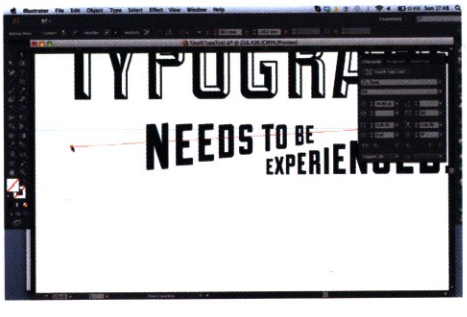
10 On a path...

You can also use the Touch Type Tool with type on a path. Draw a path with the Pen Tool and add your text to it using the Type on a Path Tool found under the Type tool in the Tools panel. A quick way to proportionally scale your letters is to work from largest to smallest and line up each letter's bounding box with its original height.



11 Time to refine

To refine the look of the type added to the path, open the type on the Path Options panel found under Type>Type on a Path>Type on a Path Options. Here you will find a number of different effects options and positions of where to align your text. Make sure the preview is selected and try the options out until you find the one that works.



12 Adjust your paths

When using type on a path, you can alter the position of the path – and therefore the type. Using a guide and the Direct Select tool, adjust the placement of the path until you get the text into a position you are happy with. Make adjustments until you are satisfied. As you can see, the Touch Type Tool offers a lot of flexibility when working with type in Illustrator.

BLEND TYPOGRAPHY AND GRAPHIC ELEMENTS

Loud, proud and expressive lettering is easy to quickly create in Illustrator. Here, Tom Lane demonstrates how to create your own customised typography in no time at all...

In this walkthrough, we're going to ditch the system fonts, break some conventions and really go to town customising a typeface, building in some graphic elements along the way. Illustrator includes many tools for editing paths – and using these techniques, we'll show you just how easy it is to create a stunning piece of bold, custom type in Illustrator in no time at all.

Hopefully this exercise will give you some techniques and know-how so you can to start pushing more of your own ideas into new and interesting areas. Even if you only use a few of the techniques here you can edit your letters as much as you like – going large and bold like we have, or subtly refining type to make it fit for your purpose. Let's get going...

EXPERT TIP: NONE MORE BLACK

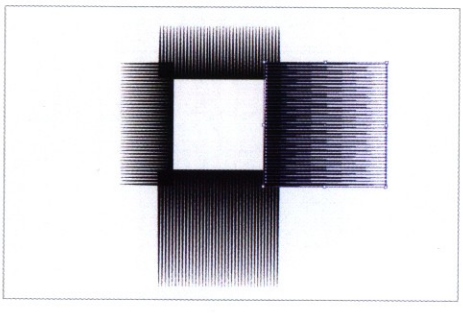
When working on designs in Adobe Illustrator, it's essential that you set up a rich black colour swatch. I usually find that the combination R-0 G-1 B-4 or C-40 M-30 Y-30 K-100 works well, both on and off screen. If you use 100 per cent black (the standard black colour swatch) to fill elements when they're exported out of Illustrator you'll find that the black completely washes out. In fact, I even go as far as removing it from my Swatches panel altogether in order to avoid mistakes.

1 Starting out...

Open a new document in Illustrator that's 1,024px x 768 pixels (but you can use any size really – our type was destined for screen). Use guides to mark a point at 54 pixels across and 54 pixels down. Choose a heavy font (we've gone with Futura Extra Bold) and type out your words – in this case 'Size Matters!'.

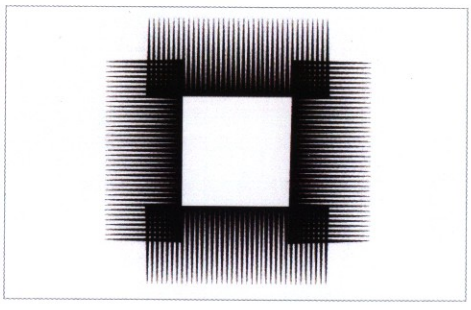
2 Tweak the spacing

Pay attention to the space between each character and the two lines. Open the Character panel and make adjustments to close up large gaps/inconsistent spacing. The space between the two 'T's of 'MATTER' is a good starting point. Space other characters to reflect this.



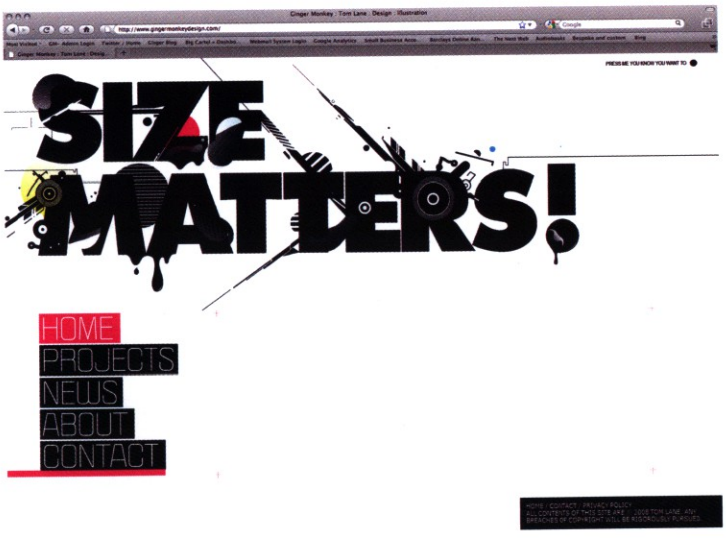
3 Create a square

To the side of your Artboard, create a square with the Rectangle Tool by holding Shift while dragging a new shape. Fill black. Select Effect>Distort & Transform>Zig Zag... Set size to 25 and the ridges to 75. Hit OK, then Choose Edit>Expand Appearance to turn the effect into paths.

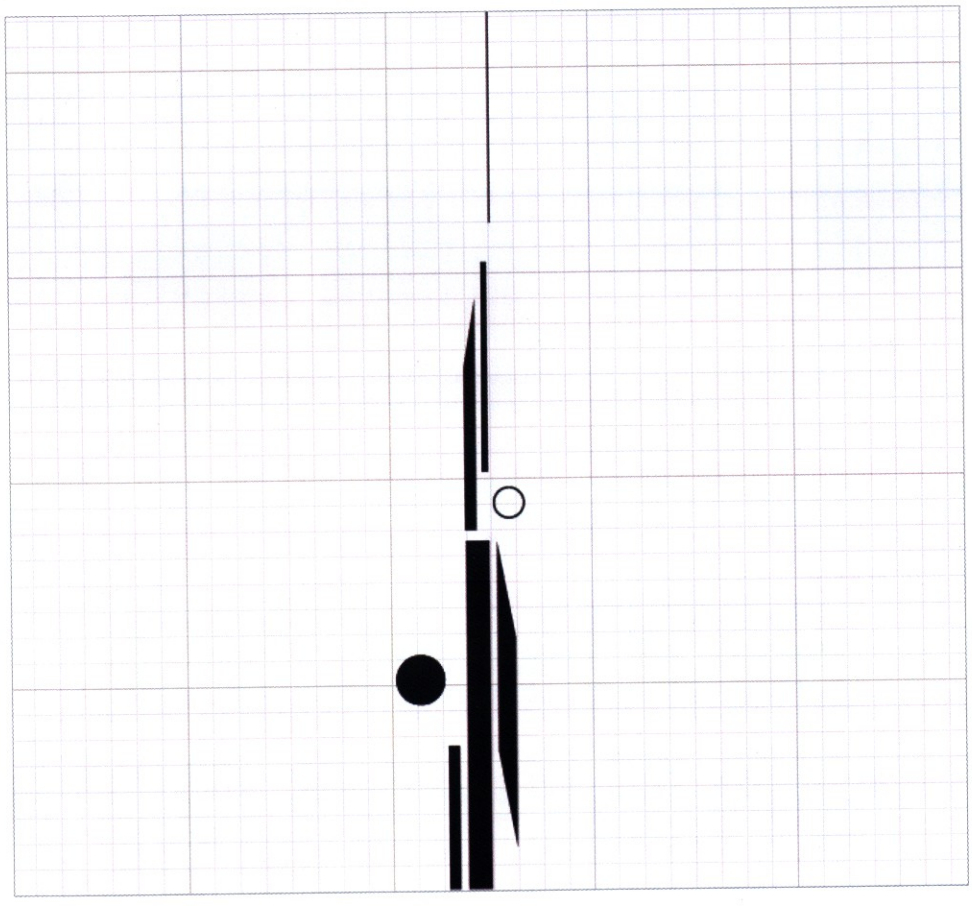


4 Tidy it up...

Use the Direct Selection Tool to drag over the paths at the top right-hand corner of the square. Delete these unwanted paths and then repeat for the other three corners. Use the Direct Selection tool again to drag out the paths on the end so the zig-zags are longer.

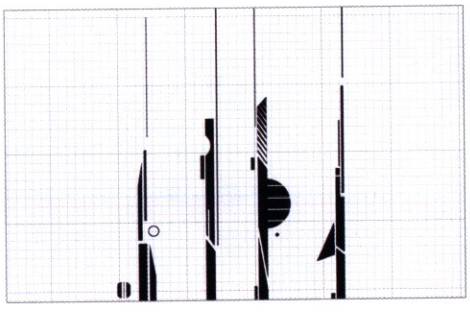


"In this walkthrough we'll show you just how easy it is to create a stunning piece of bold, custom type in Illustrator in no time at all."



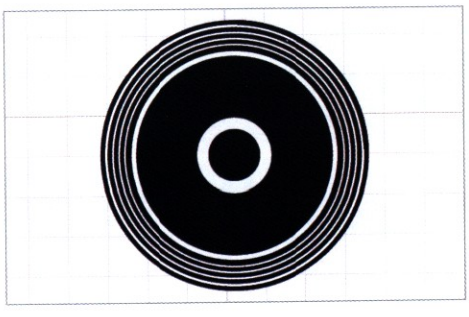
5 Work to the grid

Press Cmd/Ctrl+", to show the grid. Choose Window>Swatch Libraries>Patterns>Basic Graphics and open both the dots and line swatches. Use the grid to help you start constructing a shape similar to the image shown here using the shape tools and Pen Tool.



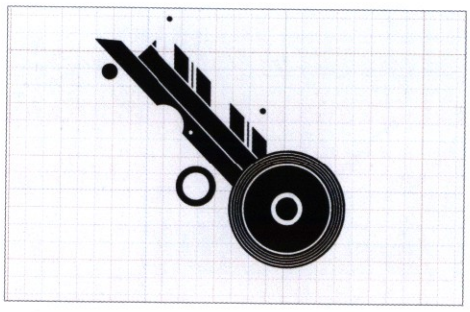
6 Patterns

Once your structure is complete, select the large black circle to the far left and experiment with filling the circle with different line patterns from the swatch library you've just opened. When complete, move on to creating more structures so you have four or five to hand.



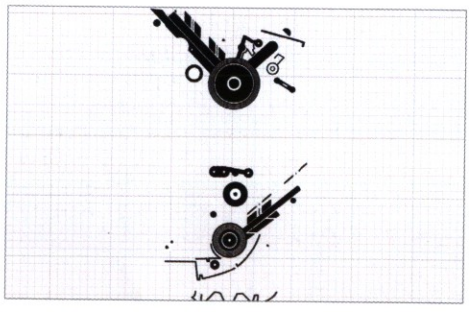
7 Design a circle

Drag a circle with the Ellipse Tool. Fill with black and copy and paste in front (Cmd/Ctrl+F). Change the fill to stroke and choose white. Go to Object >Transform >Scale and enter 96 per cent. Continue the process, changing the width of the strokes until you have something similar to the image above.



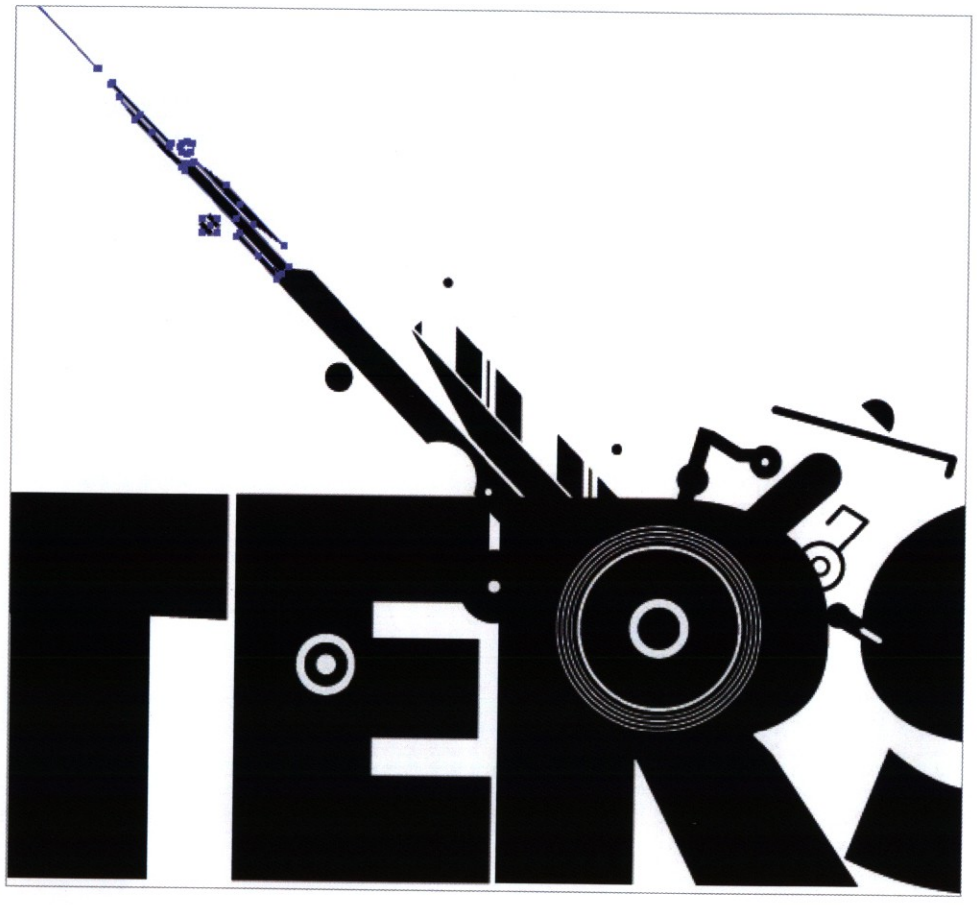
8 Adding rectangles

Use the Rectangle Tool to draw three long rectangles next to each other. Customise them by adding a line pattern and dragging the anchor point of the paths with the Direct Selection tool. Add a few circles for fine detail and place these behind the circle (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+[).



9 Different widths

Again, using the shape tools and the Pen Tool with different width strokes, replicate the remainder of the first structure in the image. When complete, move on to the second structure in the image, using the same techniques but varying their application.

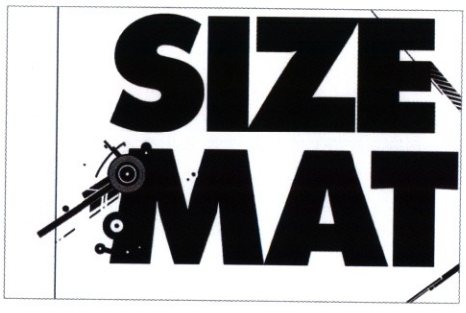


10 Add length

Now select all the elements of the first mechanical structure you made in steps 7 and 8 and place over the top of the R. Select one of the longer structures you created in steps 5 and 6 and use it to add some extra length to the mechanical structure.

11 Diagonal balance

Select another long structure and position it to follow the diagonal line of your last placement, joining the 'E' of 'SIZE' and the 'T' of 'matters'. Choose another long structure and place it so it makes a new diagonal line away from the bottom of the 'T'.



12 Rotate

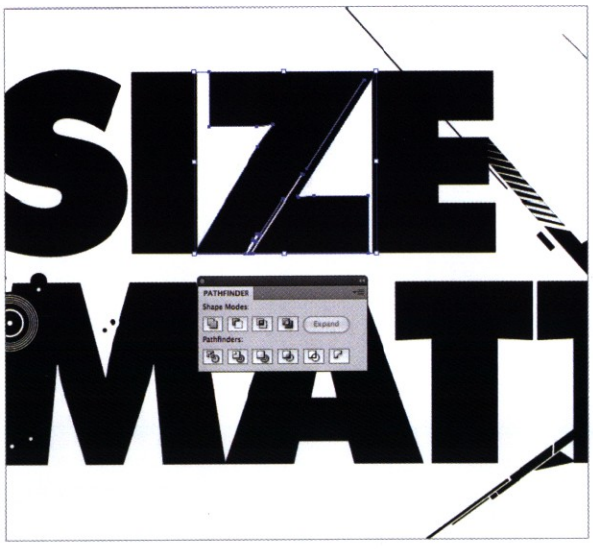
Select the second set of mechanical elements you created in steps 7 and 8. Rotate the entire selection to match that of the diagonal line you created at the bottom of the 'T' and place over the top left-hand side of the 'M'.

13 Expand and outline

Select another of the long structures. Choose Object >Expand and hit OK. Convert the colour of your structure to white and place it over the 'Z', following the diagonal line of the character. Select 'Size Matters!' and choose Type>Create outlines.

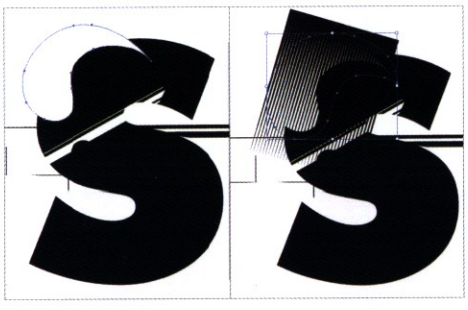
14 White elements

Select the white elements overlaying the 'Z'. Press Cmd/Ctrl+G to group. While still selecting the new group, use the Direct Selection tool to select only the 'Z' from the main heading. Open the Pathfinder panel and select the second icon, top row – the Subtract function.



15 Distressing lines

Add another of the long structures horizontally to cut through the 'S' and 'I' of 'size'. Use the Pathfinder panel again to subtract one of your long structures into the 'S' of size and then use the Pen Tool to add some more distressing lines along the horizontal line.



16 Tear drop

At the top of the 'S', draw an elongated tear-drop shape. Now take one of your zig-zag elements and place it over the tear drop. Next, draw another elongated tear drop that encapsulates the previous shape but stays within the zig-zag elements.

17 Add more detail

Keep the new, larger tear drop selected and make sure it's at the front (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+]), then select the zig-zag element. Choose Crop from the Pathfinder panel. Use this technique to start adding more detail to the characters. Experiment with different shapes and layering.

18 Individual details

Next, start to build your own individual details. Use the Pen and Ellipse Tools to add further lines and dot patterns. Pay careful attention to existing lines and feed from the existing shapes to complement and balance. But overall, experiment.

19 Finishing touches

Keep experimenting with these techniques until you've created some truly cool typography. The final touch is to introduce colour and any other elements that you think are suitable. And there you have it – Illustrated type incorporating graphic elements.

EXPERT TIP: PATHFINDER PROBLEMS

The Pathfinder panel can be a little tricky at times and throw up a few unwanted results. This can be caused by objects not having their paths closed or hidden objects being picked up in the selection. Not having the order of objects correct will also cause you problems. A good way to combat a temperamental Pathfinder panel is to methodically close all paths before you try anything by selecting each object individually and hitting the Add icon. Then double-check the arrangement and use the Direct Selection Tool.

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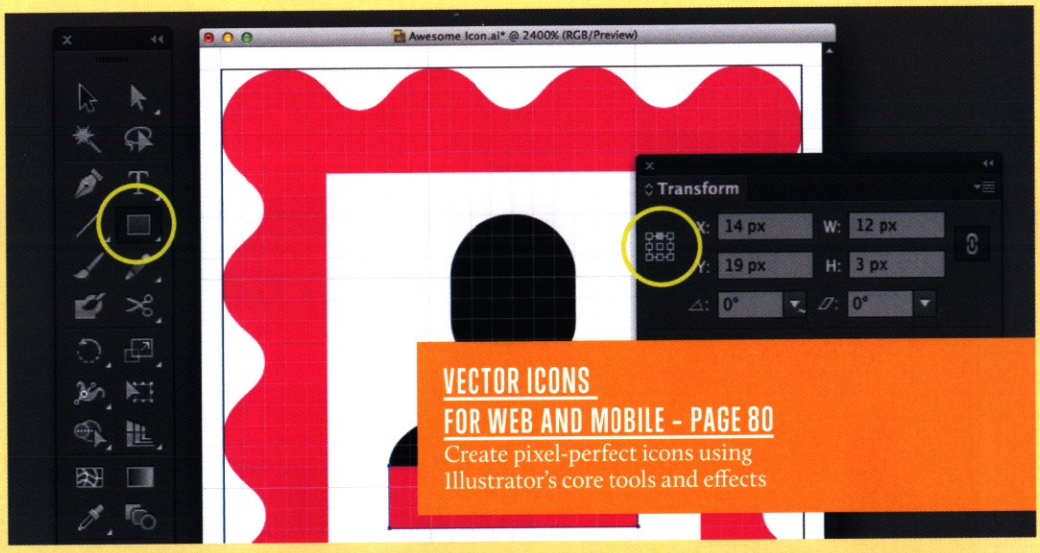
You can use Illustrator to create all sorts of crisp graphics for the web and mobile devices. Check out this range of tutorials to find out how...



VECTOR ICONS FOR WEB AND MOBILE - PAGE 80
Create pixel-perfect icons using Illustrator's core tools and effects

CSS GENERATION IN ILLUSTRATOR - PAGE 86
The new Copy CSS Attributes feature in Illustrator CC can drastically speed up your web workflow

USE KULER FOR IOS WITH ILLUSTRATOR TO CREATE WEB GRAPHICS - PAGE 88
Want to design graphics for the web in Illustrator? Here's how, with a little help from an iPhone app...

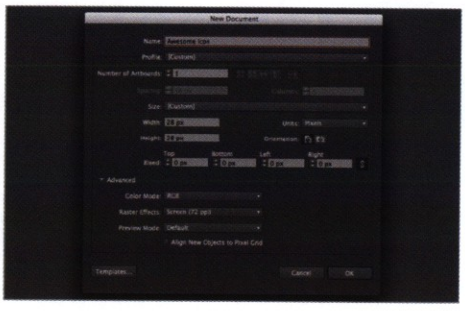
DESIGN A VECTOR ICON FOR WEB OR MOBILE

Design a pixel-perfect vector icon using effects to achieve unique shapes. Jory Raphael shows you how using some core Illustrator tools...

This tutorial will show you how to use Illustrator's built-in effects and core tools to simplify the process of drawing complex shapes. Illustrator has two types of effects: Illustrator Effects and Photoshop Effects. Both are great ways to preview styles before fully committing to them. But Photoshop Effects, once fully applied, require converting objects and shapes to raster, whereas most Illustrator Effects keep the vector data. While many icons are drawn using vectors, they're most often viewed in the bitmap world of screens. Paying attention to pixel-level detail is still important. By adhering to a grid and specifying the exact placement of elements as we draw them, we can ensure that our vector icons are both crisp and pixel-perfect.

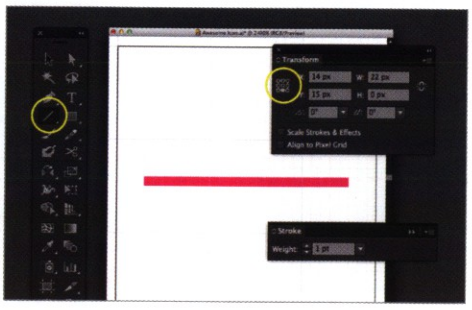
EXPERT TIP: PIXEL PREVIEW

While Adobe Illustrator is primarily a vector tool, it's also great for raster effects and icons. The default preview mode shows crisp vector illustrations regardless of how zoomed in or out you are. You can toggle a pixel preview (Window >Pixel Preview) to see how it renders objects in bitmap. When viewed at 100 per cent, the standard preview mode and the pixel preview mode should be near identical. In pixel preview mode, zooming in will show the pixel-data associated with an object. Straight lines not aligned to the pixel grid will be blurred.



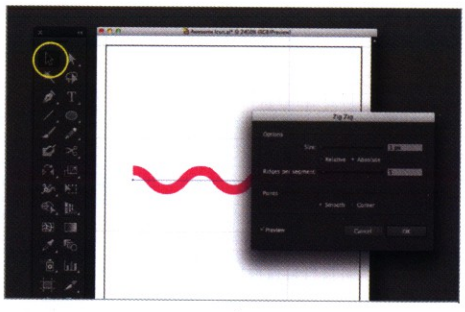
1 Starting out...

Create a new Illustrator document. Set the width/height fields to 28px. Set Units to Pixels. Click OK. Open Preferences>Guides & Grid.... Set Gridline every: and Subdivisions: to 10px. Click OK. Go to View>Show Grid.



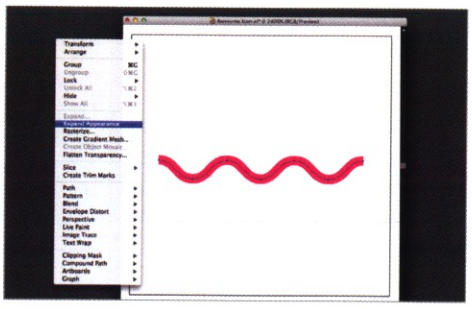
2 The beginnings...

Choose the Line Segment Tool (\). Draw a line while holding shift. In the Transform panel, select the bottom centre reference point (small grid in the panel) and set X to 14px and Y to 15px. Set width to 22px. Open the Stroke panel. Set to 1pt.



3 Zig zag effects

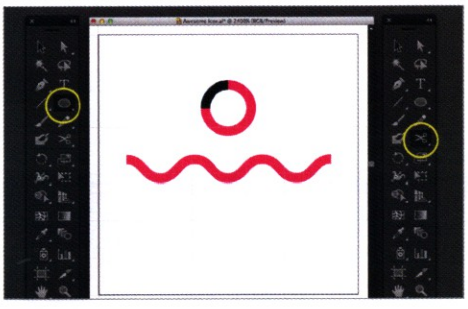
Hit the Selection Tool (V) and select the line. Go to Effects>Distort & Transform>Zig Zag.... In the dialog that appears enter the following settings: Size: 1px, Ridges per segment: 5px. Set Points to Smooth. You'll see that this quickly creates a curvy line without the need for drawing a precision path.



4 Real curves

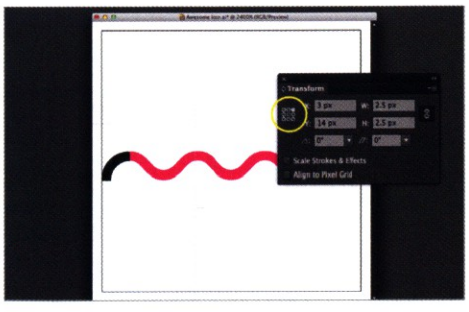
With the Zig Zag effect applied, we still technically have a straight vector line with an overlaid appearance of being curvy. For the purposes of this tutorial, we want to map the vector line to the curve we've created – so we need to expand it. Select the line and go to Object>Expand Appearance.

"When viewed at 100 per cent, standard and Pixel Preview mode should be near identical. In Pixel Preview mode, zooming in will show the pixel-data."



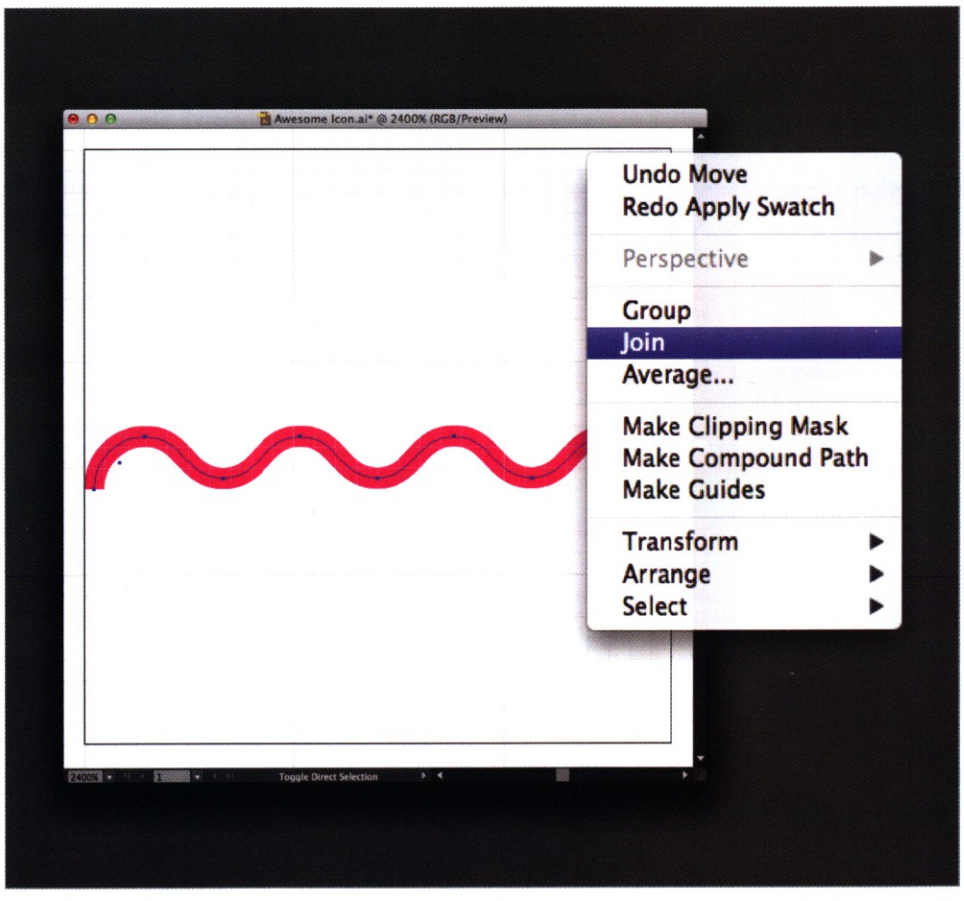
5 Draw a circle

Select the Ellipse Tool (L). Click anywhere on the Artboard. In the pop-up dialog, set the width and height fields to 5px. Select the resulting circle and then hit the Scissors Tool (C). Click on the top and left anchor points on the circle.



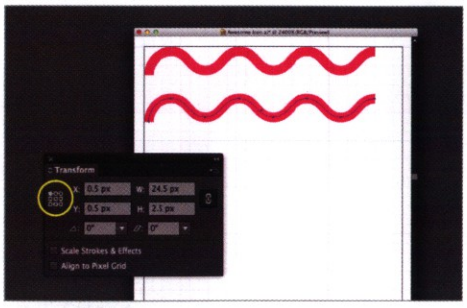
6 Align endpoints

Choose the Selection Tool from the Tools panel (or hit V on the keyboard). Select the larger portion of the circle and delete it. Select the remaining arc and, using the Transform panel, choose the top right reference point. Set X to 3px and Y to 14px to align the endpoints in the arc.



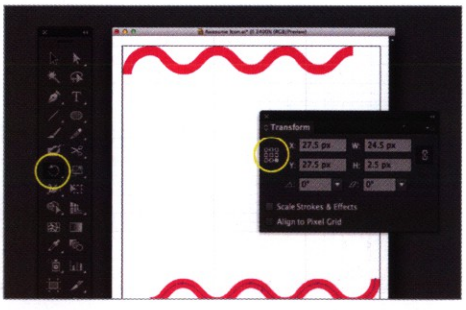
7 Join your paths

With the Selection Tool (V), select the arc and the line by either dragging or Shift-clicking. Go to Object>Path>Join. This is a very quick way of turning two separate paths into a single line. So now we have our corners for our frame design.



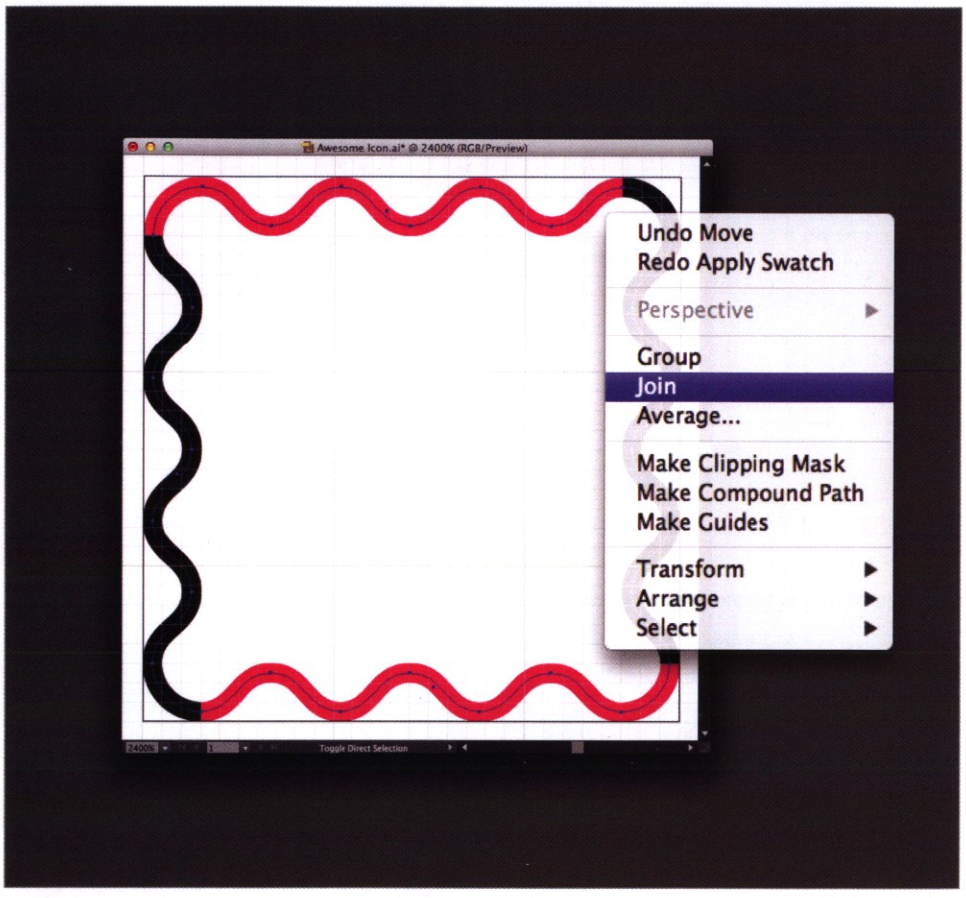
8 Duplicate lines

Select the path and then, using the Transform panel, choose the top left reference point and set X and Y to 0.5px. With the line still selected, hold Opt/Alt on your keyboard and move the line to duplicate it.



9 Rotate it...

Select the new line and choose the Rotate Tool (or press R on the keyboard) and then hit Return. In the pop-up dialog, set the angle to 180-degrees. Using the Transform panel, select the bottom right reference point and set both X and Y to 27.5px.

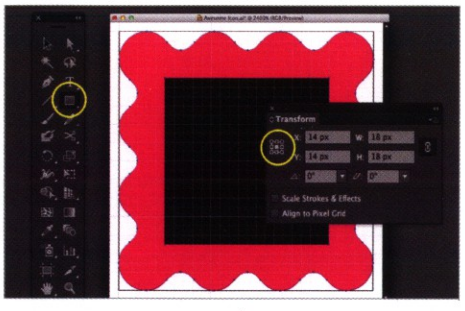


10 Join the lines

To create the full frame, select both lines, copy them, then paste them in place (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+V). Press R to switch to the Rotate Tool and hit Return. Input 90-degrees. Select all four lines and in the same way as you did in step 7, go to Object>Path>Join to make your frame a single path.

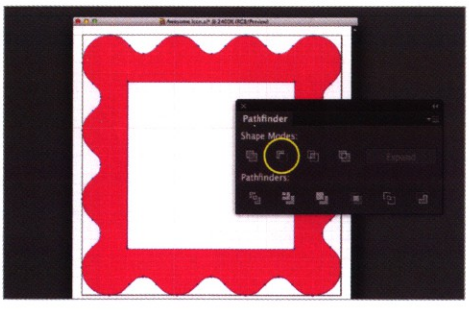
11 Expand and delete

We've now made the basic outline of the frame icon. Select the new shape and go to Object>Expand. Leave the default settings in the pop-up dialog that appears and hit OK. Choose the Direct Selection Tool (A), click on the inside edge of the outline and press delete to get rid of the fill.



12 Building the frame

Select the Rectangle Tool (M on the keyboard) and click anywhere on the Artboard. In the pop-up dialog, set width and height to 18px. Click OK. In the Transform panel, select the centre reference point and set both X and Y to 14px. At this stage it doesn't matter what the fill colour is.

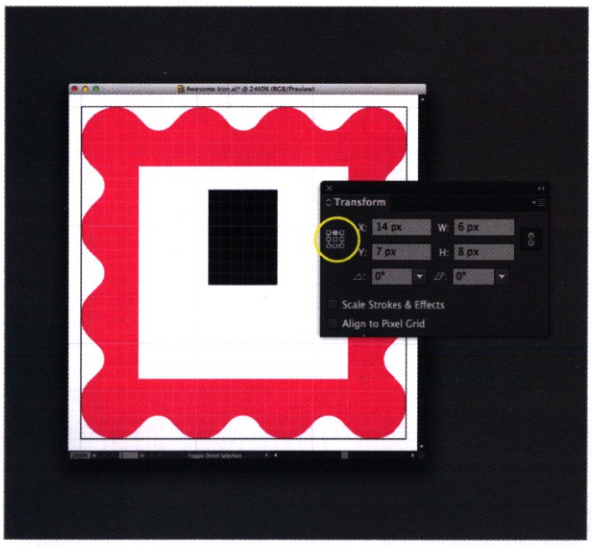


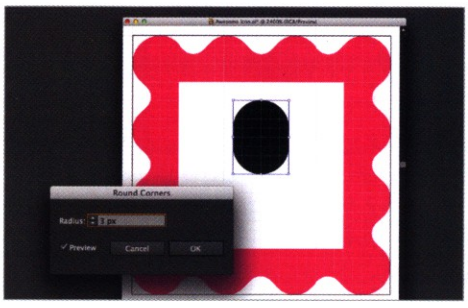
13 Make it unique

Select the outer frame and the square. In the Pathfinder panel (Window>Pathfinder) under Shape Modes, select Minus Front. This will subtract the front-most object (the square) from the object behind it (the frame) to create a new object. Check everything is lining up correctly.

14 Draw the head

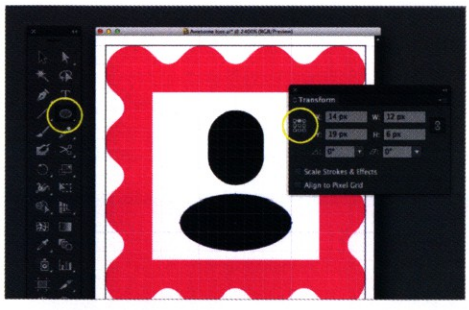
To draw the head of a figure in our picture frame, draw a 6px by 8px rectangle (M on the keyboard and then click anywhere) in the centre of the frame opening. In the Transform panel, select the top centre reference point and set X to 14px and Y to 7px.





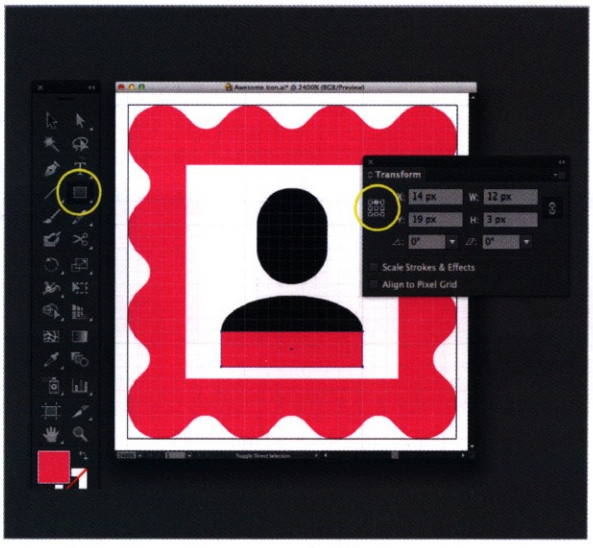
15 Give it shape

To make it look more like a head, select the new rectangle and open the Effects menu. Then select Stylize>Round Corners. In the pop-up dialog that appears, choose a radius of 3px, then, like we did before, go to Object>Expand Appearance to make this a single object – rather than a square with an effect overlaid on top.



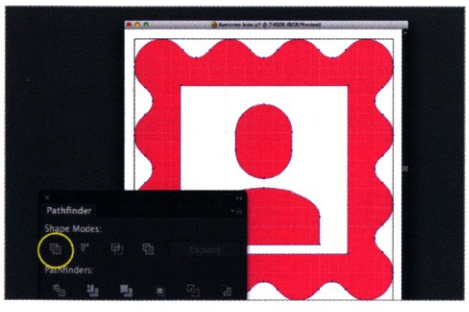
16 Build the shoulders

Draw an oval with the Ellipse Tool (L on the keyboard and then click anywhere on the Artboard). In the pop-up dialog, set the width to 12px and the height to 6px. Select the top centre reference point in the Transform panel and set X to 14px and Y to 16px.



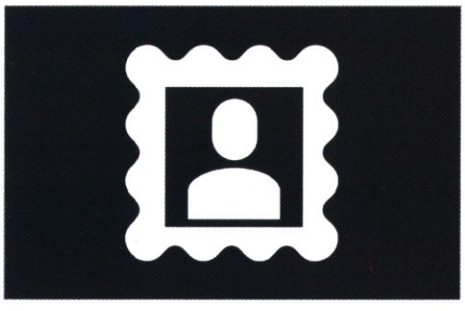
17 Create the body

What is a set of shoulders without a body? Use the rectangle tool (Press M and click anywhere) and use the pop-up dialog to create a 12px by 3px rectangle. In the Transform panel, select the top centre reference point and set X to 14px and Y to 19px.



18 Merge the shapes

Select all of the objects on the Artboard and, in the Pathfinder panel select Unite. What once was four shapes is now a single shape. For more on how to use the Pathfinder to its full potential, see our expert tips beginning on page 24.



19 Keep it crisp

And there you have it. A simple vector icon created from a crisp pixel grid. It'll stay crisp at multiples of 28px (56px, 112px, and so on) and can be infinitely scaled.

EXPERT TIP: PICTOGRAMS

Icons are visual metaphors for objects or abstract ideas. The style of icon we're creating is a pictogram. It's a small, simplified picture of something. Pictograms distil an illustration to its essence by removing unnecessary details, especially when it needs to display clearly at small sizes. For the icon in this tutorial, we're creating a framed portrait. We use stylised edges to imply the framing technique with the wavy lines hinting at an ornate frame typical of formal portraits. Small details can convey a lot of information.

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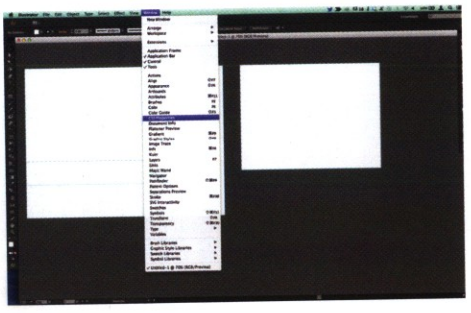
BOT & DOLLY PROMO: BOX OF TRICKS
Bot & Dolly and Gmunk used robots, performers and projection-mapping to create Box – a mesmerising film that, unbelievably, was all captured in-camera
KEY INFO

USE ILLUSTRATOR TO GENERATE CSS

Illustrator CC has a powerful new capability: it can generate CSS directly from the appearances you create, ready for use on the web. Let's look at how to do it...

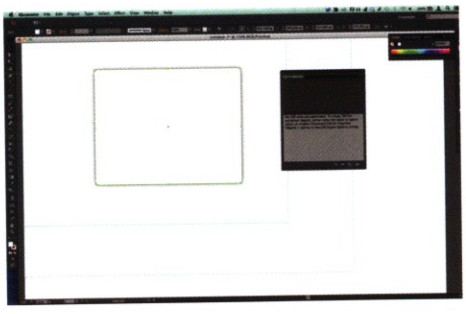
If you've ever built a website from a mock-up, you'll know that a lot of the work is recreating the styles the designer has used. However, thanks to Illustrator CC's new Copy CSS Attributes feature, that is now unnecessary. Now you can copy styles directly from Adobe's vector drawing app, without having to recreate all the characteristics in CSS by hand.

Illustrator won't create a website for you, but there are different ways you can get CSS out of the application, saving time and effort. Alongside the Copy CSS feature, the Export CSS feature also exports only the selected object(s) as transparent PNG files. Here we shall look at how you can use Illustrator in your web design workflow.



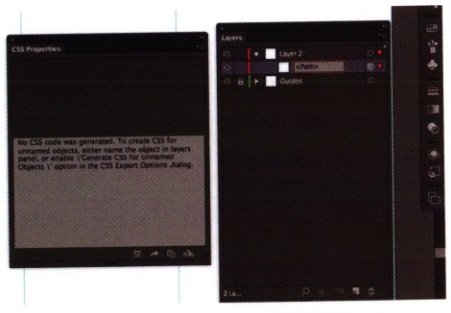
1 The CSS panel

To generate and export CSS inside Illustrator, Adobe has introduced a panel that enables you to generate, preview and copy code. You can find the CSS panel by choosing Window>CSS Properties inside Illustrator CC. The panel is a box with a space ready for code. The real power of CSS export in Illustrator is in how you set up your document.



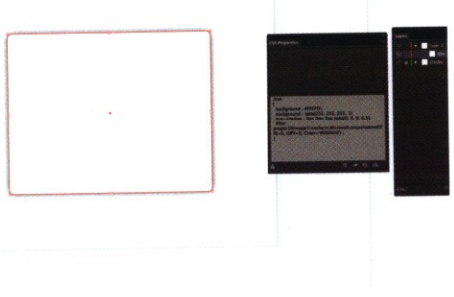
2 Generate artwork

Create a simple rectangle using the Rectangle Tool. Once you've got a shape, apply a rounded corner effect (Effect>Stylise>Round Corners...) and give it a corner radius of 10px. Apply a Drop Shadow effect in the same way (Effect>Stylize>Drop Shadow). You should have a shape that looks similar to the above. The colour at this stage is not important.



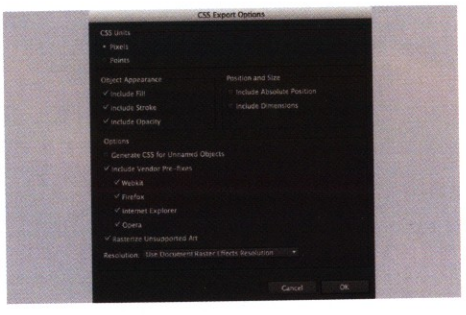
3 Name the object

In order to automatically generate CSS when you select an object, that object needs to be named within the layer. If you haven't already got your Layers panel visible, choose Window>Layers (F7). Open the layer your artwork is on and double click on the currently selected object in the Layers panel. This enables you to rename your object. Name it Box.



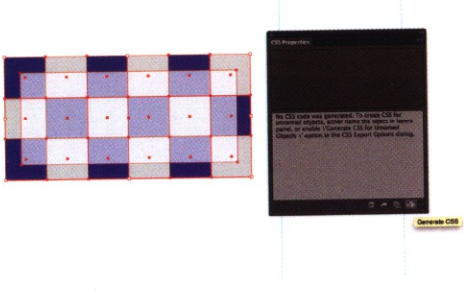
4 Preview the CSS

Now you've named your object, you'll see that Illustrator's CSS Properties panel has updated to provide a CSS definition for the object, using the name as a class definition. As we used effects that are possible to render using CSS3 there's actually no need to export any artwork here. You can simply copy and paste the CSS code into your web editor.



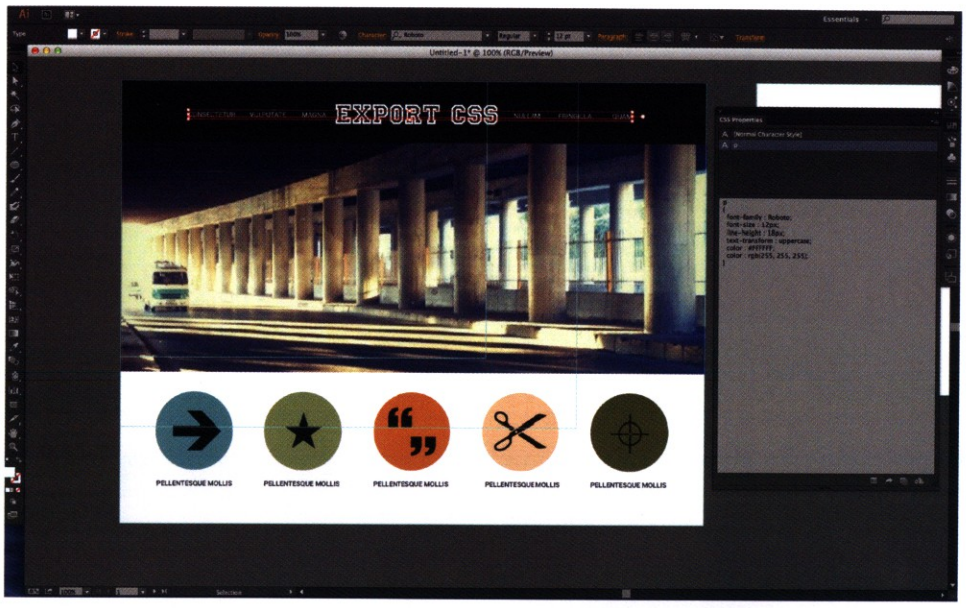
5 Control the CSS output

At the top right corner of the CSS Properties panel, you'll see the fly-out menu that provides access to the Settings dialog. Choose Export Options from this menu to open the controls for how CSS is generated and exported. For example, you can choose to export with or without vendor-prefixed versions of beta-stage properties.



6 Effects unsupported by CSS

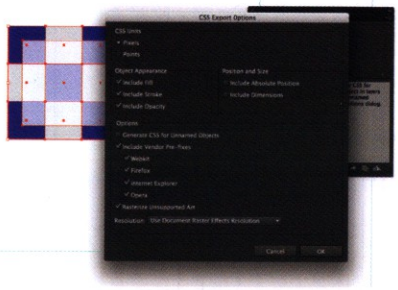
There are some effects that can't be generated using CSS alone. There are also some that are more practical to be rendered as a static image. In these situations, Illustrator will export your CSS and any images necessary to render the effect. However, you will need to approach the task differently in order for the artwork to be rendered in CSS alone.



"Illustrator CC can handle almost all of your typographical CSS export needs."

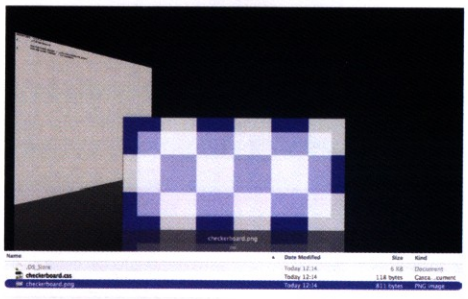
7 Export as CSS

Group the artwork you want to export. If you want to export three images you should have three grouped objects. Select the objects to export and choose File>Export. In the export dialog box, choose CSS (css) from the Format drop-down menu. Next, choose the name and location of the CSS file to be generated, and click Export to proceed.



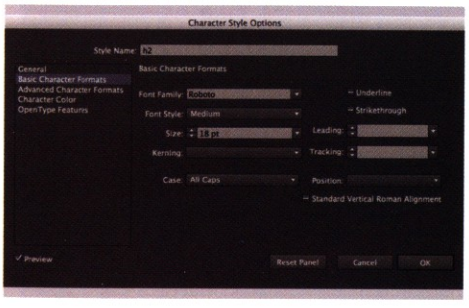
8 Control export options

You'll now see the same CSS Export Options dialog from step five. This time the changes you make will only apply to the currently exported artwork. This gives you the opportunity to change the size of the images you're rasterising. This is ideal for HiDPI export scenarios where you want to output versions suitable for both 72dpi and 300dpi displays.



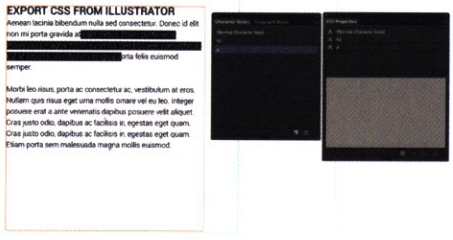
9 Collect your assets

Click OK to generate your CSS. Illustrator will create a file with the standard CSS extension, but will also isolate and export each grouped object as a transparent PNG file. This means that you no longer need to create slices inside Illustrator, as it now creates a perfect export for you based on your selection. This alone is a really useful time-saver.



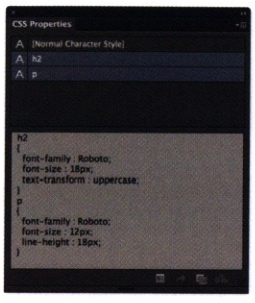
10 Create character styles

Illustrator can handle almost all of your typographical CSS export needs. Start by generating character styles for each of your different content types. Make sure you use Character Styles, not Paragraph Styles. Name each style according to the HTML element you'll be using, so H2 for a heading 2 element and P for a paragraph element and so on.



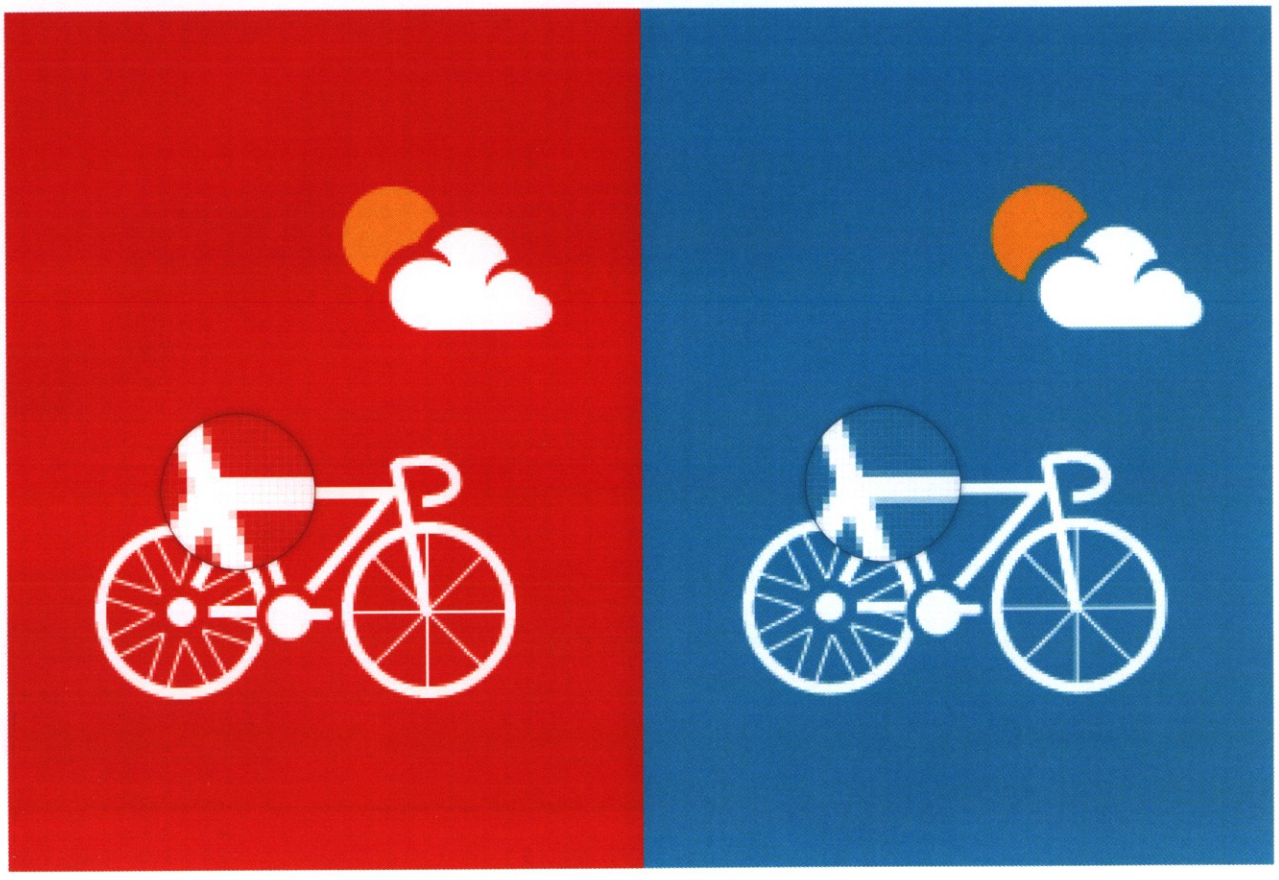
11 Styles in the CSS panel

Now as you style up your text, you'll notice that each style in use appears inside the CSS Properties panel. Any styles that you've defined within the Character Styles panel but haven't used in the document will not appear in the CSS panel. A useful additional feature is that you can use the CSS panel to style selected text with the relevant style.



12 Select to export

When you're ready to export your HTML text styles, deselect every object. Next, highlight the character styles you'd like to export within the CSS Properties panel. The CSS Properties panel will update as you go –providing all your styles are in one easy copy/paste box ready for immediate use in your web editor – without the need to run a manual export.



CREATE 'KULER' WEB GRAPHICS

Matt Hamm explains how to use Kuler (both iPhone app and on the web) and Illustrator to create harmonious web graphics that scale crisply...

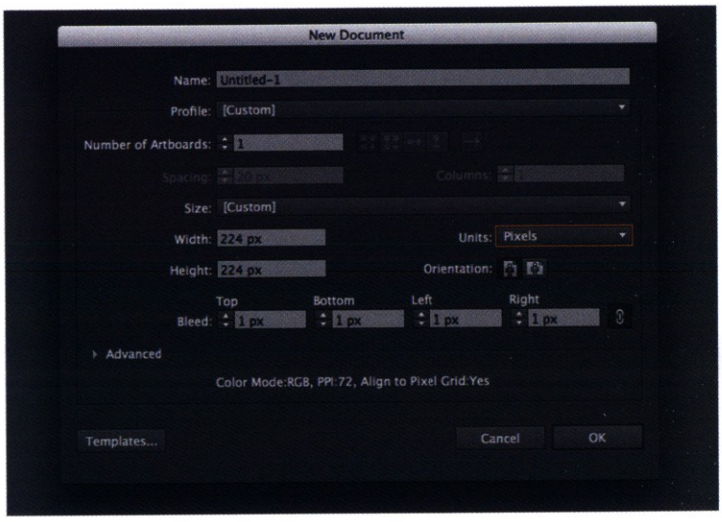
Getting the colour palette right in your design or illustration is naturally a key part of the work. A crisp vector graphic, properly prepared for the screen and coupled with a carefully considered colour palette, can really make your website sing.

With the recent introduction of HiDPI screens for tablets and notebooks, it's increasingly important to provide graphics that can scale smoothly but still provide file sizes suitable for low bandwidths, especially for mobile. Icons saved as x2 size bitmaps to serve high-density screens are not always the best option. Instead, consider creating your graphics in vector format from the outset for a more flexible set of assets, easily be scaled at a moment's notice and exported as SVG files or PNG fallbacks.

In this tutorial, we'll explain how to create scalable, web-ready graphics with harmonious colour schemes. We won't literally be showing you how to recreate the graphics here – rather think of this as a workflow checklist rather than a conventional walkthrough.

Along the way, we will be using Adobe's Kuler iPhone app for a slick colour workflow and Illustrator to create the crisp graphics. The two applications make a great combination, and using your mobile as part of your workflow can break you free from your desk, too, which almost certainly helps creativity. This walkthrough follows on from our Kuler primer which gives you everything you need to know about Adobe's excellent service. Flick to page 56 to read that. But for now, let's get going...

The Kuler website (kuler.adobe.com) offers a vast array of user-generated colour palettes



Our example document. You'll need to change the units setting to Pixels when starting out

1 Ditch the defaults

Whatever you do, never use those default colours in the Illustrator Swatches panel. Thanks to Kuler, Adobe's colour-scheme generator (kuler.adobe.com), gorgeous colour palettes are only a few clicks away. You can sign up for a Kuler account at kuler.adobe.com/join, or just log in with your Adobe ID.

The Kuler iPhone app is a fantastic tool

2 Use the Kuler app

Download the free Kuler iOS app from the App Store (currently not available for Android). Log in and you can start capturing colour inspiration from anywhere using your iPhone or iPad camera. This wonderful little app provides you with live colour palettes from anything you point the camera at. The results can be unexpected and at times inspiring.

3 Saving palettes

Save any of your colour palettes on your iPhone or iPad and appear in the Kuler panel right inside Illustrator. You can sync, search and add colour palettes from Kuler directly into your swatches. Using the web interface you can browse the most popular or most used colour themes and mark your favourites. It's a colour selection workflow that works.

4 Creating your graphics

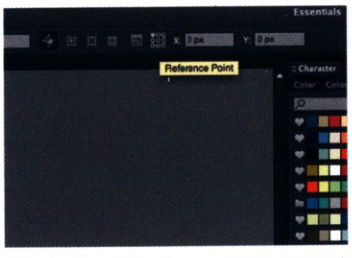
So, let's look at what you need to do to ensure that your Illustrator artwork appears pixel-sharp on the web. Launch Illustrator and create a new document (File>New). As an example, we will create a document with equal height and width. Set up a new document at 224x224px. It can be a lot easier to work with pixel artwork in Illustrator if the Artboard has an even width and height. This means the exact centre of the Artboard will fall at the corner of a pixel rather than the middle of one. Depending on what you are creating, this might not work for you, but it's definitely always worth considering when starting a piece.

5 Pixel Preview

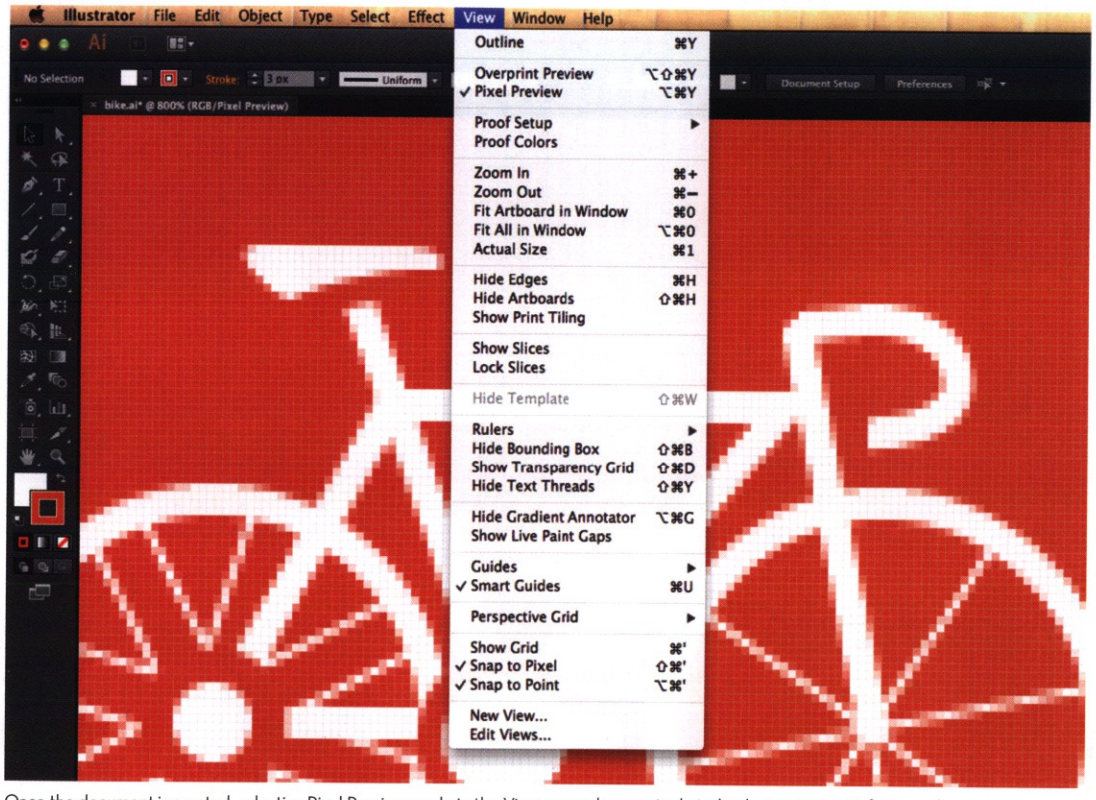
Still in the New Document dialog, reveal the Advanced options by hitting the small arrow. Next, make sure Color Mode is set to RGB and the Raster Effects to Screen (72ppi). Change the Preview Mode to Pixel, so that when you zoom into the artwork you can actually see pixels rather than smooth vector shapes. To view the pixel grid when working in Illustrator, zoom to 600 per cent or higher in Pixel Preview mode (View>Pixel Preview). You can also check the Align New Objects to Pixel Grid checkbox. It can sometimes cause display issues with new objects, so this option is also available in the Transform panel (Window>Transform), if you need to turn it off.

6 Trouble-free pixels

With the document now created, there are a couple of things to check to ensure you'll have trouble-free pixel perfection. Click on the Artboard Tool in the Tools panel (it's about two-thirds down but you can also hit Shift+O on the keyboard). In the Control bar at the top of the screen, you will see the Reference Point icon: it looks like a grid of nine small squares. Make sure the top-left square is selected. This means that if you decide to change the size of an Artboard later, it will be resized from the top-left corner, rather than from the centre, which may cause pixels to change their intended position. You can also access the Reference Point icon by double-clicking the Artboard Tool to bring up the Artboard Options – it appears in the Position area of the dialog. Double-check that your X and Y values (the fields next to the Reference Point icon in the Control bar) have no decimal places. A value of 0.5px, for example, can cause artwork to miss the grid. You can set the width and height of your Artboard here, but let's stick to the document size we started with.



Choosing the right reference point is essential



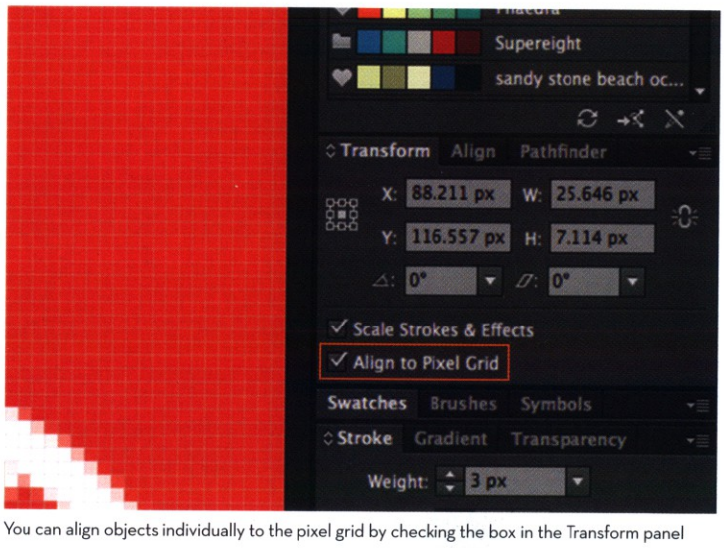
Once the document is created, selecting Pixel Preview mode in the View menu shows actual pixels when you zoom in far enough...

7 Snapping

Open up the View menu. Notice that when Pixel Preview is ticked (View>Pixel Preview), the option further down the menu changes from 'Snap to Grid' to 'Snap to Pixel'. This setting can be toggled, depending on the view.

8 Alignment

In the Transform panel, you'll see a checkbox marked Align to Pixel Grid. An object with the Align to Pixel Grid option selected is nudged to align to the pixel grid whenever it is modified. If you move or transform a pixel-aligned object, it will be re-aligned to the grid according to its new position. To save time, if you find that you have lots of objects that are not aligned to the pixel grid, simply click Select>Object>Not Aligned to Pixel Grid to select those objects. You can then move those objects as a group to get them back on the grid.



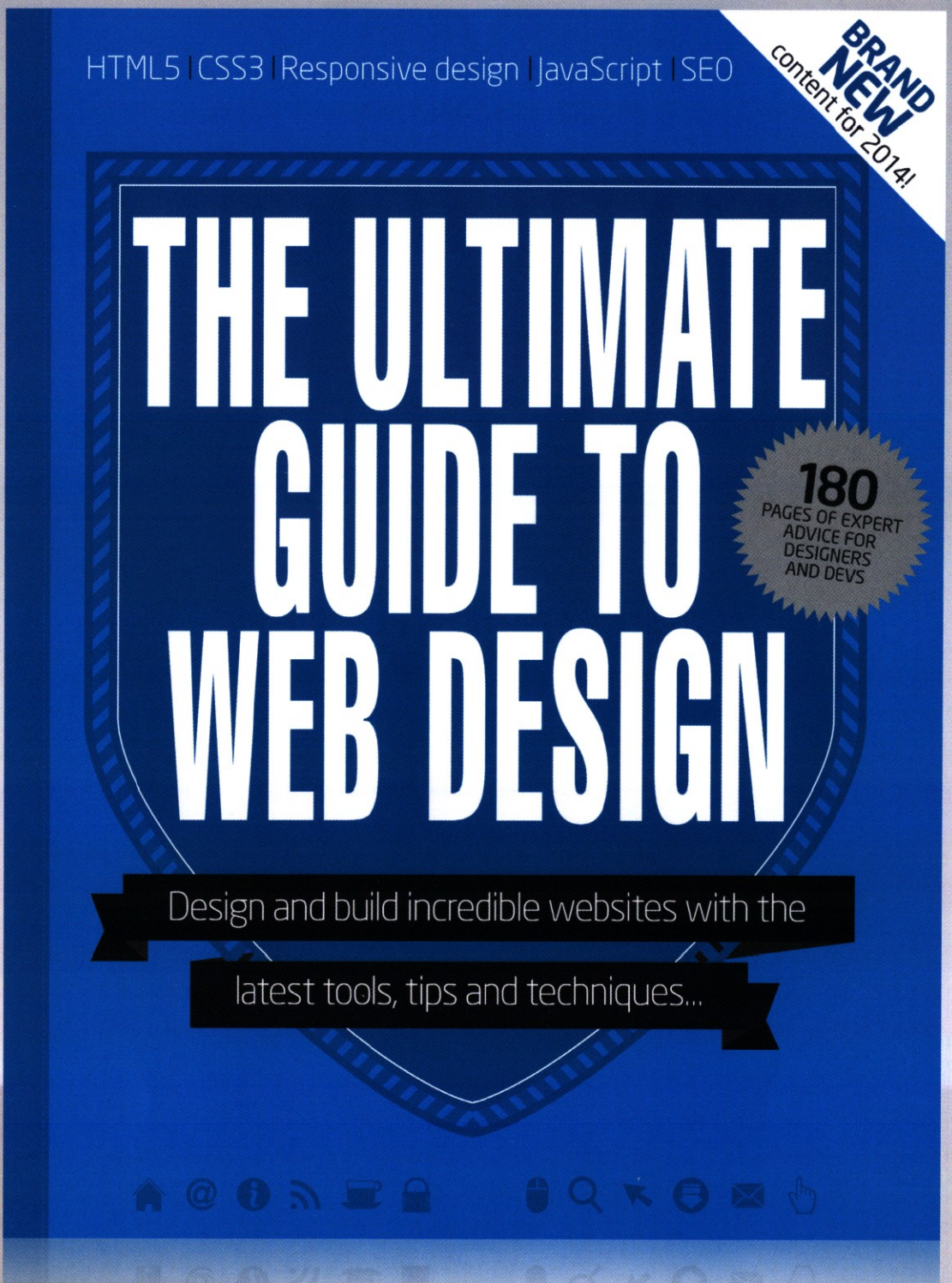
You can align objects individually to the pixel grid by checking the box in the Transform panel

9 And finally...

When drawing shapes with strokes, Illustrator will, by default, align the path on a sub-pixel level to achieve pixel alignment on strokes whose numerical width is odd: 1px, 3px, 5px, and so on. You can, of course, change the stroke alignment to outside, inside or centre in the Align Stroke section of the Stroke panel and the shape will try to compensate. However, if you are planning on exporting pixel-perfect vectors to SVG, you may be wise to keep to centre alignment, as the SVG format doesn't support outside- or inside-stroke alignments.

EXPERT TIP: CAPTURE COLOURS

Try reading Sharon Milne's 'Capture Colors with the Adobe Kuler App for the iPhone' article. It's a great, more in-depth, article about how to use the Adobe Kuler iPhone app, including past colour resources available, how to download and install the Adobe Kuler iPhone app, creating new themes, modifying colours and accessing colour themes in Adobe Illustrator CC. Grab it at: vector.tutsplus.com/articles/news/capture-colors-with-the-adobe-kuler-app-for-the-iphone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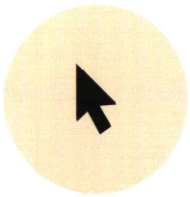
ILLUSTRATOR
THE COMPLETE TOOL GUIDE

Illustrator has such a remarkable toolset it's difficult to know where to start. The Tools panel alone has a plethora of options, with a huge number of flyouts between them – most of which you've probably never used. Over the next six pages we bring you the ultimate guide to all of these. From the Symbol Stainer to the Stacked Column Graph – every tool that you may have thought superfluous to your needs is explored.

So, keep this handy reference guide on your desk – it will undoubtedly speed up your workflow and hone your Illustrator knowledge.



Selection tool

Keyboard shortcut: V

The Selection tool, unsurprisingly, enables you to select, move, duplicate (with Alt/Opt), scale and rotate objects, groups or paths in your Illustrator document. If you have smart guides turned on, as you hover over a path – and so on – you get quick feedback in green as to what you're about to select. By holding Ctrl/Cmd, you can quickly change to the Direct Selection tool.

Direct Selection tool

Keyboard shortcut: A

The Direct Selection tool – accessed by hitting the A key or using Ctrl/Cmd with the Selection tool – enables you to edit individual points and paths. For instance, you can drag a path out to alter a shape by clicking and dragging on it in a non-selected state. You can also drag on points for precise editing of objects.

Group Selection tool

Keyboard shortcut: Shift+A

The Group Selection tool probably won't be used that often, but it's a handy way of selecting individual objects within a group and then different groups within your document. Clicking once on an object will select the object, clicking twice will select the group it sits in and clicking a third time will add the next group in your document to your selection. Continue clicking to add more groups.

Magic Wand tool

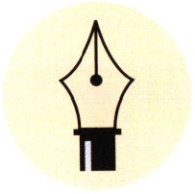
Keyboard shortcut: Y

Use the Magic Wand tool to quickly select objects with the same kind of attributes – for instance, the same stroke weight, stroke colour, opacity or blending mode. Double-click the tool to customise it (a panel then appears where you can decide which attributes you want to select). This is a seriously handy tool – even though the Select>Same command gives you a bit more control.

Lasso tool

Keyboard shortcut: Q

A simple one, this: drag over single points, a number of anchor points or objects to select them. When you've selected the points, you can use the Control panel to edit accordingly. You won't use it often, but it does offer another way to select points – albeit in a more freehand and less controlled way.



Pen tool

Keyboard shortcut: P

The standard Bézier drawing tool that you'll find across the Creative Suite. Draw complex objects using points to connect them. Use the Alt/Opt key to change to the Convert Anchor Point tool and then edit the direction of your paths by adjusting the Bézier handles. In addition, the tool will automatically change to the Add Anchor Point tool when hovering over a path and the Delete Anchor Point tool when hovering over a point.

Add Anchor Point tool

Keyboard shortcut: +

Use this tool to add anchor points to a path. It's more than likely that you'll just use the Pen tool to add anchor points, but if you prefer this way of working, the option is there.

Delete Anchor Point tool

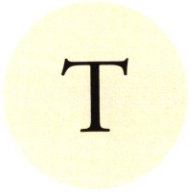
Keyboard shortcut: -

Use this to delete anchor points from your shapes (or just use the Pen tool).

Convert Anchor Point tool

Keyboard shortcut: Shift+C

The Convert Anchor Point tool is an essential drawing tool, enabling you to convert corner points into smooth points (and vice versa). Click and drag on an anchor point to use the tool.



Type tool

Keyboard shortcut: T

Like the equivalents in other CC apps, Illustrator's Type tool enables you to create type – or a container of type – and edit it using the various typography panels (Character, Paragraph and so on – found under Window>Type) or the Control panel.

Area Type tool

Keyboard shortcut: N/A

The Area Type tool enables you to select a non-compound, non-masking path and type text inside it. For instance, create a shape using the Pen tool and then change to the Area Type tool, click on the path and then you'll be able to add horizontal text inside the object.

Type On A Path tool

Keyboard shortcut: N/A

Create a path using the Pen tool and then use this to create text along it.

Vertical Type tool

Keyboard shortcut: N/A

Almost exactly the same as the Type tool, only this one enables you to create vertical text (either by dragging a container or just clicking on the canvas).

Vertical Area Type tool

Keyboard shortcut: N/A

Add vertical type inside an object using this tool.

Vertical Type On A Path tool

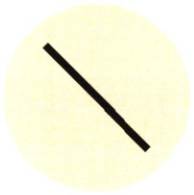
Keyboard shortcut: N/A

Create vertical type along a path using this excellent tool.

Touch Type tool

Keyboard shortcut: N/A

The Touch Type Tool enables you to edit individual characters in exciting new ways. Distort, scale, move and adjust your letters – and all the time the text remains live.



Line Segment tool

**Keyboard shortcut: **

Use this to draw individual straight-line segments. Change the stroke and other attributes (like all of these drawing tools) by using the Control panel. Double-click the tool for its options (default length and so on).

Arc tool

Keyboard shortcut: N/A

The Arc tool is lovely for drawing concave or convex curves without using the Pen tool. Double-click on the tool to bring up its range of options. Here you can change the length, whether the arc is open or closed, the direction of the arc and the slope. It's a very powerful tool and one that's no doubt underused and undervalued.

Spiral tool

Keyboard shortcut: N/A

Use this tool to draw clockwise and anti-clockwise spirals. Click and drag to determine size and angle, or single-click on the canvas for more control over the size and shape of your spiral.

Rectangular Grid tool

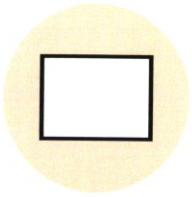
Keyboard shortcut: N/A

Want to quickly draw a grid? Use this handy tool. Double-click the tool to change size and vertical and horizontal dividers, among other options.

Polar Grid tool

Keyboard shortcut: N/A

Use this to create circular grids. Double-click the tool for default size options and to change the number and skew of concentric and radial dividers. You can also choose to fill the grid and create a compound path from the ellipses.



Rectangle tool

Keyboard shortcut: M
Draw a simple rectangle or square using this tool. Change the default size by clicking once on the canvas and changing the options.

Rounded Rectangle tool

Keyboard shortcut: N/A
Use this to create rectangles and squares with rounded corners. To change the corner radius, click once on the canvas and enter the required number. You can edit the anchor points of the rounded corners for more control.

Ellipse tool

Keyboard shortcut: L
Quickly create circles and ellipses. Hold Alt/Opt to draw from the centre and Shift to constrain. Click once on the canvas for precise control over the size of your circle or oval.

Polygon tool

Keyboard shortcut: N/A
Draw polygons with this tool, altering the number of sides and the size by simply selecting the tool and clicking once on the canvas.

Star tool

Keyboard shortcut: N/A
Quickly draw stars with different numbers of points. As with all the drawing tools, you can click once on the canvas to change options (in this case size and number of points), as well as use Shift to constrain proportions and Alt/Opt to draw from the centre for more control over the position of the shape.

Flare tool

Keyboard shortcut: N/A
It's not one you'll use very often, but is very handy for adding quick reflections and light effects to your objects. Clicking once on the canvas creates a flare and then enables you to set such options as size, rays, halo and rings. You can also click and drag on the canvas to create a larger flare.

Selection tool

Keyboard shortcut: B
Use this tool to paint natural-media-like vectors onto your canvas. When used in conjunction with the Brushes panel it gives you a hugely powerful painting setup in which strokes remain infinitely editable without any loss of quality. Double-click the tool itself to change its basic options.

Blob Brush tool

Keyboard shortcut: Shift+B
The Blob Brush enables you to paint using filled shapes rather than paths. Using it, you can quickly create complex objects. Alter the size of the brush on the fly by using the [and] keys. It's a great tool when used in conjunction with a Wacom tablet, and feels like you're painting in Photoshop or similar (but with the infinite scalability of vectors).

Pencil tool

Keyboard shortcut: N
Use the Pencil tool to create freehand paths and objects. Best used with a tablet, obviously. Double-click the tool to access its options.

Smooth tool

Keyboard shortcut: N/A
Use this tool to quickly smooth a path – making it a lot straighter, for instance. Click-and-drag along the path to smooth it, and double-click the tool itself to experiment with its options.

Path Eraser tool

Keyboard shortcut: N/A
The Path Eraser tool can be used to erase parts of a path. Using it is simple: just drag along the length of the path segment that you want to remove.

Eraser tool

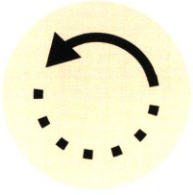
Keyboard shortcut: Shift+E
Use this tool like a brush to erase parts of an object. Alter the size and then paint into your objects to remove parts. Make sure you clean up the points of your new shape.

Scissors tool

Keyboard shortcut: C
Use the Scissors tool to quickly cut sections from a path. Click once at the first point you want to cut and again at the second point. One object will become two separate paths that you can move and edit independently.

Knife tool

Keyboard shortcut: N/A
The Knife tool enables you to cut objects in half. Simply drag the tool across the object or path. Once you've cut an object, you can then edit the two parts independently.



Rotate tool

Keyboard shortcut: R
Use the Rotate tool to quickly rotate objects, paths, groups and multiple selections either freely or at a specified angle by double-clicking on the tool and entering the required rotation angle. You can set the rotation pivot by dragging it on the canvas.

Reflect tool

Keyboard shortcut: O
Use this tool to quickly flip an object over a fixed axis. Double-click to expand the tool's options – you can change the reflection axis and create a copy of the object as you reflect. Handy.

Scale tool

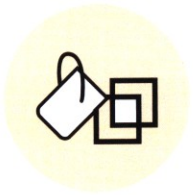
Keyboard shortcut: S
You know what this one does – it scales an object around a fixed point (which you can change). You can also use this tool to reflect an object. Double-click the tool to reveal its options, which include choosing between Uniform and Non-Uniform scaling and whether you scale strokes and effects.

Shear tool

Keyboard shortcut: N/A
Use the Shear tool to skew an object around a fixed point. Click and drag on the object to skew it, or double-click the tool for more precise transformation options.

Reshape tool

Keyboard shortcut: N/A
The Reshape tool is very neat. It enables you to adjust selected anchor points while keeping the overall detail of the path intact. Select which points you want to edit and then drag the shape. It's great for subtle adjustments that don't affect the overall feel of your object or path.



Live Paint Bucket tool

Keyboard shortcut: K
The Live Paint Bucket tool enables you to quickly paint faces and edges of live paint groups (and convert objects to live paint groups if you haven't already). As you hover over an object, the cursor displays as either one or three coloured squares, which represent the selected fill or stroke colour and, if you're using colours from a swatch library, the two colours adjacent to the selected colour in the library. It's much simpler than it sounds – essentially it enables you to colour up your illustrations very quickly indeed.

Shape Builder tool

Keyboard shortcut: Shift+M
The Shape Builder tool is almost like an interactive Pathfinder, enabling you to quickly merge and extract objects. Simply select the objects you want to merge, select the Shape Builder tool and then drag across the objects. It's worth experimenting with as it can be a very quick way to create complex shapes.

Live Paint Selection tool

Keyboard shortcut: Shift+L
This tool simply enables you to select Live Paint faces and edges, either individually or by dragging a marquee around the desired objects. To select faces or edges with the same fill or stroke, triple-click an item.

Width tool

▶ **Keyboard shortcut: Shift+W**

Now this is a great tool. If you're after calligraphic effects, where strokes have a variable width, use the Width tool to create that effect. Simply hover over your path, click and drag to change the width of the stroke at that point.

Warp tool

▶ **Keyboard shortcut: Shift+R**

Use the Warp tool to interactively push and pull paths and objects using a brush-based approach, subtly moulding them into the shape you require. Holding down the Alt/Opt key before you start enables you to change the shape and size of the brush you use.

Twirl tool

▶ **Keyboard shortcut: N/A**

You probably won't use this very often, but when you want to add swirling distortions to an object or path, you'll want to use the Twirl tool. Be careful, as you may end up with a lot of points. Like most of Illustrator's distortion tools, you can hold Alt/Opt to change the brush size and shape, and double-click the tool itself for further options.

Pucker tool

▶ **Keyboard shortcut: N/A**

Think of the Pucker tool as an instrument to 'deflate' an object by moving control points towards the cursor. Use Alt/Opt to change the brush size. It's a tool that takes some getting used to, but can be invaluable for minor edits to your objects.

Bloat tool

▶ **Keyboard shortcut: N/A**

The opposite to the Pucker tool, the Bloat tool 'inflates' an object. Essentially, you can use it to push parts of your object outwards or give them a more rounded feel. When used sparingly, it can be an excellent tool to have at your disposal.

Scallop tool

▶ **Keyboard shortcut: N/A**

This adds random inward curves to the edges of your objects: it's essentially for roughening up your shapes. Change the brush size by holding Alt/Opt before you use the tool – and then experiment with what size works best.

Crystallize tool

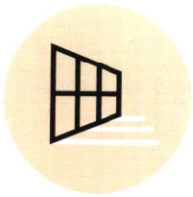
▶ **Keyboard shortcut: N/A**

The opposite of the Scallop tool, this adds random spiked detail to the edges of your shapes. Again, it can be great for roughening up an object.

Wrinkle tool

▶ **Keyboard shortcut: N/A**

Also used for roughening up the edge of an object, the Wrinkle tool adds, er, wrinkles to the edges of your shapes. Experiment with brush sizes and remember that holding Alt/Opt enables you to change the brush size, and holding Shift as well constrains the shape of the brush.



Perspective Grid tool

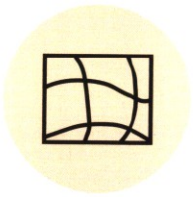
▶ **Keyboard shortcut: Shift+P**

This useful tool makes it very easy to create isometric illustrations (or just those with the correct perspective without worrying about setting up your own vanishing points). After selecting the tool, click on the canvas to bring up the grid and edit it using the points on each axis. Click on the grid you want to draw on and begin drawing. Everything will match up to your grid. To get rid of the grid go to View>Perspective Grid>Hide Grid.

Perspective Selection tool

▶ **Keyboard shortcut: Shift+V**

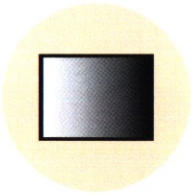
Once you've created your objects in perspective, you might want to select, move and transform them. In order to do this, use the Perspective Selection tool. Just drag an object and it will move in perspective. If you want to move it out of perspective, use the normal Selection tool.



Mesh tool

▶ **Keyboard shortcut: U**

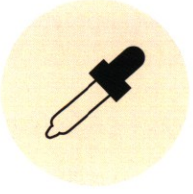
A great tool, but one that's tricky to master. The Mesh tool enables you to construct highly realistic vector images – skin or metal, for instance – using a number of points to blend colour together. First create an object, and then within that object begin selecting colour and using the Mesh tool to add the colour at certain points. Continue to build up subtle variations by adding points next to each other with slightly different colours. It's not easy to get right, but can yield some incredible results.



Gradient tool

Keyboard shortcut: G

Use this in conjunction with the Gradient panel to create linear or radial gradients. You can click-and-drag across an object to define its gradient fill and then interactively edit that gradient using the slider that appears.



Eyedropper tool

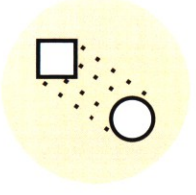
Keyboard shortcut: I

Use the Eyedropper to copy appearance attributes between objects in your Illustrator document. Double-clicking the tool enables you to specify which attributes you can copy. You can also use it to sample colours from raster images.

Measure tool

Keyboard shortcut: N/A

Use this, as in InDesign and Photoshop, to measure the distance between two points. It's as simple as that.



Blend tool

Keyboard shortcut: W

The Blend tool is used to blend objects together. Just drag from one selected object to another with the tool. Make every part of your blend editable by going to Expand in the Object menu and then ungrouping.

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS
ILLUSTRATOR CC

TOOLS

Selection	V
Direct Selection	A
Group Selection	Shift+A
Magic Wand	Y
Lasso	Q
Pen	P
Add Anchor Point	+
Delete Anchor Point	-
Convert Anchor Point	Shift+C
Type	T
Line Segment	\
Rectangle	M
Ellipse	L
Paintbrush	B
Pencil	N
Blob Brush	Shift+B
Eraser	Shift+E
Scissors	C
Rotate	R
Reflect	O
Scale	S
Width	Shift+W
Warp	Shift+R
Free Transform	E
Shape Builder	Shift+M
Live Paint Bucket	K
Live Paint Selection	Shift+L
Perspective Grid	Shift+P
Perspective Selection	Shift+V
Mesh	U
Gradient	G
Eyedropper	I
Blend	W
Symbol Sprayer	Shift+S
Column Graph	J
Artboard	Shift+O
Slice	Shift+K
Hand	H
Zoom	Z
Toggle Fill/Stroke	X
Default Colours	D
Swap Fill/Stroke	Shift+X
Colour	,
Gradient	.

VIEW

Toggle Screen Mode	F
Show/Hide All Palettes	Tab
Increase/Decrease Diameter	]/[
Toggle Drawing Mode	Shift+D

FILE

Units	Ctrl/Cmd+,
Other Script	Ctrl/Cmd+F12

EDIT

Paste in Front/Back	Ctrl/Cmd+F/B
Paste in Place	Ctrl/Cmd+Shift+V
Paste on All	Alt/Opt+Shift+Ctrl/Cmd+V
Colour Settings	Shift+Ctrl/Cmd+K

OBJECT

Transform	Ctrl/Cmd+D
Move	Shift+Ctrl/Cmd+M
Bring to Front	Shift+Ctrl/Cmd+]
Bring Forward	Ctrl/Cmd+]
Send Backward	Ctrl/Cmd+[
Send to Back	Shift+Ctrl/Cmd+[
Group	Ctrl/Cmd+G
Ungroup	Shift+Ctrl/Cmd+G
Unlock All	Alt/Opt+Ctrl/Cmd+2
Join	Ctrl/Cmd+J
Join Average	Alt/Opt+Ctrl/Cmd+J
Make	Alt/Opt+Ctrl/Cmd+B
Release	Alt/Opt+Ctrl/Cmd+Shift+B
Make with Warp	Alt/Opt+Ctrl/Cmd+Shift+W
Make with Mesh	Alt/Opt+Ctrl/Cmd+M
Make with Top Object	Alt/Opt+Ctrl/Cmd+C
Edit Contents	Shift+Ctrl/Cmd+P
Make Clipping Mask	Ctrl/Cmd+7
Release Clipping Path	Alt/Opt+Ctrl/Cmd+7
Make Compound Path	Ctrl/Cmd+8

NEXT ISSUE...

COMPUTER ARTS DESIGN MATTERS | STUDIO TRAINING

INDESIGN

Master grids, layout, type and templates as we show you how to design brilliant print and digital magazines, brochures, flyers and much more...

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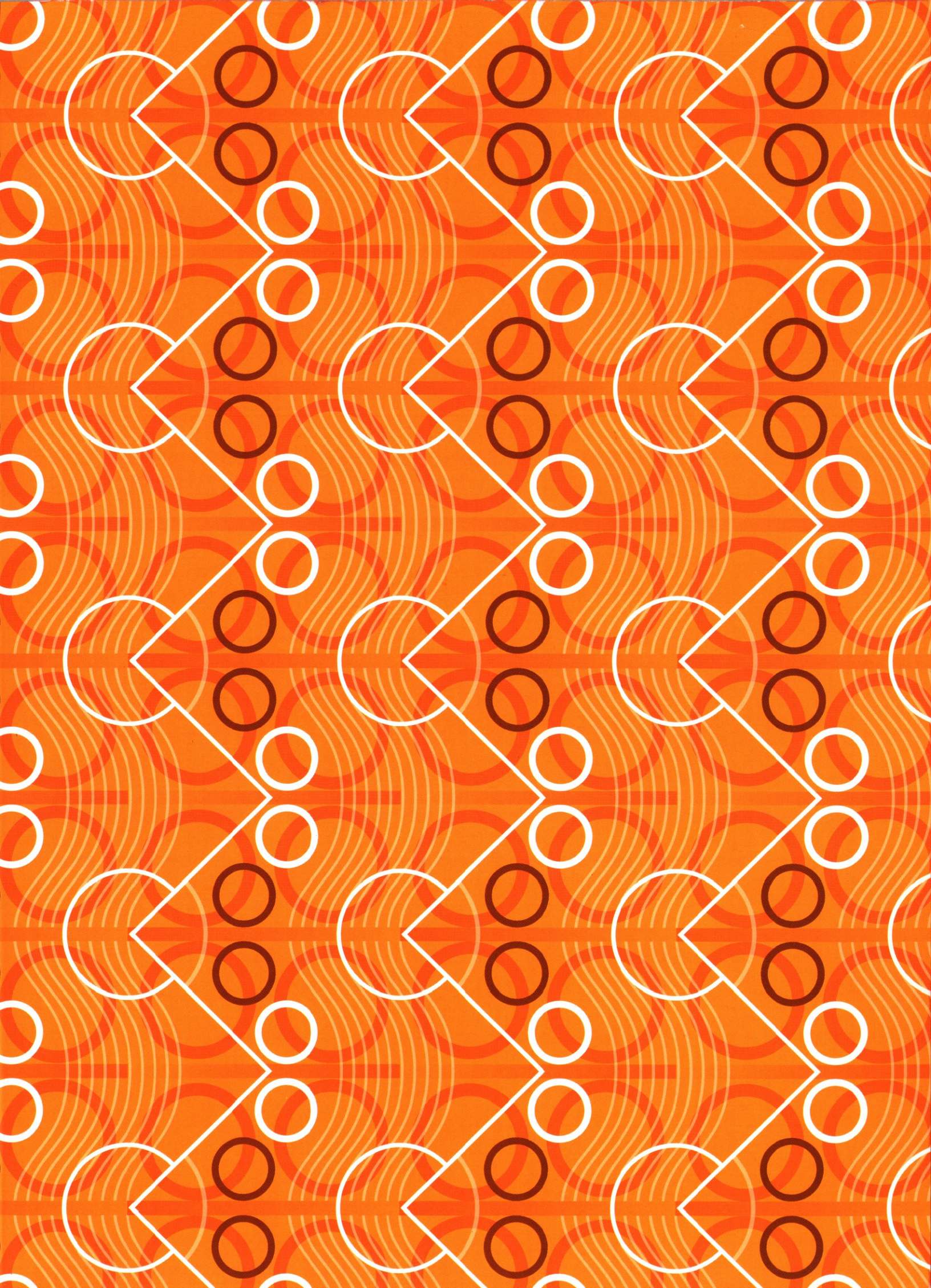

STUDIO TRAINING

ILLUSTRATOR

Create stunning illustrations, design better logos, master illustrated type and wow your clients with your new-found Adobe Illustrator skills!

ILLUSTRATION AND DESIGN

- Speed up your illustration workflow with our time-saving tips and techniques
- Master Illustrator's key tools such as the Pen, Pathfinder and Shape Builder
- Design stunning abstract patterns and character artwork

ILLUSTRATED TYPE

- How to take a standard system font and create a complete advertising image from it
- Learn the secrets of editing type using outlines, points, paths and anchors
- Discover the new Touch Type tool and how it can make working with type a breeze

LOGOS AND BRANDING

- Starting with a sketch, place your design in Illustrator and create a winning logo design ready for client presentation
- Use multiple Artboards to design a wide range of branding collateral

ILLUSTRATOR FOR THE WEB

- Design an icon in Illustrator for use on your site or in your mobile app
- Copy CSS attributes directly from Illustrator for easy – yet amazing – web effects

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